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What is Christianity?

WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?

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A STUDY OF RIVAL INTERPRETATIONS

BY
GEORGE CROSS

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TO MY WIFE

PREFACE

The aim of this work is to assist the intelligent Christian layman and the minister of the gospel who have felt the need of revising their doctrinal inheritance to reach a more satisfactory interpretation of the Christian faith. Everyone who has taken the pains to acquaint himself in any tolerable degree with the effects which the adoption of the methods of modern science in many fields of theological investigation has produced in the minds of great numbers of students for the ministry must be aware of the imperativeness of thinking through afresh the essential problems of theology. In no department of Christian thought is this imperativeness more evident than in the subject of apologetics. The older works on this subject, notwithstanding the splendid philosophic ability exhibited in many of them, demonstrably fail to meet the most insistent questions of our times. The discussions presented in this volume are, in the mind of the author, preparatory to a statement and vindication of the truth of the Christian religion. They do not constitute a formal introduction to such a task, as anyone can easily see. But it is hoped that a survey of the best-known types of the Christian faith will assist the inquiring reader to reach at least a point of view from which his work of formulating a theology for himself may begin.

What is here written is the fruit of a great many years of reading and reflection combined with the searching experiences of the classroom. In order that the work

might be reasonably brief there has been a general avoidance of digression, however great the temptation at times, and the statements made are very condensed, on the whole. But I trust that the style is sufficiently popular to enable the reader who is unskilled in the technique of formal theology to read the book with some satisfaction.

The contents of the volume, excepting the last chapter and such slight revisions as seemed necessary, have already appeared as a series of articles in the *Biblical World*. My thanks are due to the publishers of this journal for their consent to the publication of them in book form.

GEORGE CROSS

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INTRODUCTION

Christianity is the name commonly given to the religion that came into existence through the career of Jesus of Nazareth and professedly preserves his character to this day. Christianity is a religion; that is, the name stands for a way in which men seek unitedly to come into communion with the eternal and invisible, a way in which they attempt to enter into happy relations with the Supreme Being. It is a historical religion; that is, it had its beginnings at a definite period of human life in this world and the course of its progress from age to age is traceable. It is a religion whose votaries aim at honoring the worth of him from whom it sprang by calling themselves by a name that designates his supreme place among men—Christ, Anointed of God, Sent of Heaven, King of their Hearts—Christians, Christ-ones.

When the historian unfolds before our eyes the manner in which this mighty spiritual movement has spread throughout the world and continued through the centuries, our attention is transfixed and our thought is challenged. What is it? What does it mean? Its phenomena are so vast and so varied and its followers have differed so much among themselves that at times one is tempted to say that there is often little or nothing more than the name in common. Yet even the possession of a common name is significant. The name may supply the clue to the true interpretation of its character. At any rate, for the intelligent man the attempt to interpret it is inevitable.

The interpretation of Christianity is not exclusively the work of the scholar and philosopher. For the home of this religion has not been mainly in the high places of human life but more especially in the lives of the common people. They have given the most abundant interpretation. The conscious interpretation of it by the professional thinker is dependent on the popular, half-involuntary, half-conscious interpretation that is offered in the ways of the masses of believers—their spontaneous religious speech, acts of worship, songs, prayers, modes of conduct, customs of assembly, and methods of organization. The thinker must try to account for these things.

The interpretations of Christianity that have appeared are numerous. In our survey it will be necessary to pass by many that are of only minor interest and limit our study to the great outstanding types. We shall select six—Apocalypticism, Catholicism, Mysticism, Protestantism, Rationalism, and Evangelicism. These overlap and mingle, of course, but they are sufficiently distinct to stand apart in our study.

CHAPTER I

APOCALYPTICISM

It is related in the Gospel of Mark that at a critical point in his career "Jesus asked his disciples, saying unto them, Who do men say that I am? And they told him, saying, John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but others, One of the prophets. And he asked them, But who say ye that I am? Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Messiah" (Greek, Christ).

These are momentous words, for they record the first historic confession of the Christian faith. It seems to have risen spontaneously to the lips of the disciple when the Master's great question was asked and he spoke with the evident assurance that he was uttering the conviction that bound him and his companions together in a common allegiance and a common hope. Here, therefore, we date the beginning of the Christian religion. Here, for the first time, the followers of the Nazarene were consciously differentiated from the rest of men by their unanimous trust in his mission. Here, too, for the first time, Jesus was placed outside the category of common men, even of the highest and best of them, and assigned a unique place in the world. What, more precisely, that place should be was as yet vaguely conceived in the minds of his followers. The colloquy that follows Peter's confession reflects a clash of ideas on the subject among his disciples from the outset. The controversy about him that has continued for

centuries was then at its beginning, and the end of it is not even yet in sight.

Among the many Christian confessions that rise up as way-marks along the road of Christian history, Peter's confession enjoys a pre-eminence, and that for a better reason than its priority in time. For it has always been and still remains the most popular of them all. In this stock confession of Christendom subject and predicate have become so closely united that the two words, Jesus and Christ, regularly stand together as a single personal name. Moreover, this confession is the parent of all the others. For they are all enlargements or modifications of it, and they indicate the manner in which faith in the messiahship of Jesus has infused a new meaning into beliefs that arose at first independently of it. We can say—for we see it now as it was impossible for those early disciples to see it—that the Petrine confession marked the rise of a new religion among men. It did not seem so, I say, at the time. For to say that Jesus was the Christ seemed at first simply to say that through him was to come the realization of the Jewish hope. But the actual outcome was vastly different from what anyone could have anticipated. For it was only a little while before the new faith found itself in violent conflict with the Judaism out of whose bosom it sprang. A dramatic account of that conflict appears in the early chapters of the Acts and is reflected by anticipation, as it were, upon the accounts of Jesus' career. The root of the controversy lay in the question whether the faith in Jesus did not represent the true Judaism. And now, after the lapse of all the intervening centuries, it is still an open question whether, after all, it was not mis-

leading to call Jesus the Christ. Did not Peter's confession introduce into the minds of Jesus' followers a misconception of the character and purpose of Jesus? In assigning to him the character and the purpose of the Jewish Messiah did it not pervert his true aim and theirs? And has not the Christian faith been burdened with beliefs in consequence from which it still seeks relief? This is in part the subject of our present discussion.

The significance of the primitive confession that Jesus was the Messiah is to be perceived only by reference to the whole circle of ideas to which the term belongs. For the story of the origin and development of Jewish Messianism the reader must be referred to the works of specialists, to whom of late we owe a great increment of knowledge on the subject. It is not possible in the present connection to do more than indicate in a general manner the conditions and conceptions out of which it sprang. Jewish Messianism is a prominent feature of a specifically Jewish philosophy which men have called Apocalypticism. Jewish Apocalypticism is a modification, under the influence of the Jewish religious spirit, of a widespread, if not universal, oriental philosophy of the universe and of human life. The character of this philosophy we shall expound more fully presently. The thing we wish to point out just now is that the effect of the adoption by Jesus' followers of Peter's confession was to carry Jewish Messianism over into the new Christian community and thereby bring the minds of Christians so directly under the power of Jewish Apocalypticism that it became naturalized in their interpretation of their new faith. That is to say, Christians found, first of all, in the formulas of Jewish

Apocalypticism a body of ideas by which they were enabled to express to themselves and to others the significance and worth of the personality and career of Jesus. Christian Apocalypticism is a Jewish heritage. The conceptions by which the religious Jew was wont to set forth his hopes for the future were transferred to the Christian mind and became the instruments of its self-expression. This was quite natural at a time when the great body of believers in Jesus came of Jewish stock. But the union of Christian faith and Jewish philosophy, which was so natural to men of the pharisaic type of mind, has continued to the present day when the naturalness of it is no longer clear. We shall see that, like so many other marriages, it has been both for better and for worse. Its fruit is mingled evil and good.

On the other hand, the fact that conceptions that were formerly distinctively Jewish have obtained a powerful hold on many other peoples and races and have maintained their hold on them for long centuries creates a presumption that these conceptions must have belonged originally to mankind at large or, at least, have borne such a likeness to prevailing conceptions among other peoples that the transition from one to the other must have been easy and natural. The comparative study of religions has confirmed the presumption. We were formerly trained so thoroughly in the belief that the Jews were most especially a people separate from all others that we forgot they were the natural heirs of ecumenical traditions. The Jews were but a single branch of the Israelitish people, the Israelites of the Hebrews, the Hebrews of the Semites, and the Semites of the stock of that ancient humanity whose story has

been mostly lost to us. The Jews were, therefore, the natural heirs of the traditions of many races, whatever traditions they may have had that were peculiarly their own. Their likeness to the common Semitic stock, at least, was much more marked than their unlikeness. Then, too, their geographical location in Palestine, that ancient battle-ground of many mighty peoples, brought them into close contact with the great complex of experiences and ideas that constituted the culture of the ancient world. Their acquisitiveness as a people, combined with their individuality, enabled them to stamp the traditions that had flowed down to them from many sources with their own distinctive characteristics. This inheritance of theirs became woven through and through with their monotheism and their highly moral conceptions of the nature of the Deity and of man's relation to him and then, through the dispersion of the Jews, was given to the world. This position is thoroughly confirmed by the critical study of the Jewish Scriptures and the recovery of the knowledge of ancient mythology. It may not be possible to disentangle completely the different strands that have been woven into the Jewish Scriptures, yet it is perfectly plain to the discriminating student that much of the folklore and mythology that belonged to other nations recurs in the Old Testament, but has been transformed there by the higher spirit that was given to the Jews.

Now the striking thing about the traditions of primitive culture is the similarity of the main strands of their folklore and their myths even when the various peoples concerned were far separated in time and distance and without apparent contact with one another. The peoples

that were able to establish stable governments over large territories and to secure the safety essential to the growth of the higher forms of culture wrought up these primitive stories into literary and philosophic forms, but did not obliterate their original features, so that the link of connection between the cruder and the finer culture of antiquity has been preserved. Their underlying unity is discernible. The general themes of these ancient constructive efforts of the human mind are the same everywhere. They all reflect in highly dramatic and realistic form the effect produced upon the spirits of men by the constant struggle with the powers of material existence. They tell the story of the destructive fury of malignant forces that assail men and also the story of deliverance from these foes. Their interest was not so very different from the interest with which we today pursue our study of the world and of man, namely, the aim to realize the highest well-being. But the place which is taken by abstract ideas in our present philosophies was occupied by realistic, semi-personal creations of the ancient mind. In what we are pleased to call—in less marked anthropomorphic form—the impersonal forces of nature, men of old saw the operations of living beings. What we *figuratively* describe as the battle of the elements they regarded as the actual encounters of real animate existences possessed of passions like ours. Whether we turn to the mythology of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Iranians, Indians, or Greeks, the interest is the same, namely, the framing of an account of the origin of the woes and the blessings of men through the operations of what we call, somewhat blankly, "nature," but what they, in part, personalized.

These mythologies present three outstanding features in common: First of all, prominence is given to the material forces against which men seem to have struggled so often in vain—stormy seas, raging floods, torrential rains, earthquakes, and fires. These forces working harm to hapless men are viewed as great monsters of transcendent might, say, a great dragon or a serpent in the deep or in the sky. Sometimes by a fusion of traditions these monsters were multiplied. Secondly, human experiences of deliverance from these baneful forces are pictured as the beneficent deeds of some great hero, generally more distinctly human in form than were these dangerous beings, but still superhuman. These saviors of men throttle and subdue the evil powers and rescue men from sufferings and calamities by a higher control of cosmic forces. Thirdly, there was a representation of a Golden Age in the distant past when men were without their present trials, and for the return of that age they fondly hoped. Perhaps we should say that this was not so much a memory of the past as an anticipation of the future reflected upon the past and held as a ground of encouragement for the future.

Here is a pictorial philosophy so widespread among the ancients that it seems to be native to men. It constitutes a view of things that is both a cosmic philosophy and a philosophy of salvation. It sets forth the three main forms of experience in which men become aware of their universal kinship. First, their sufferings and misfortunes are due to forces too mighty for them to master or control unaided. Secondly, there is deliverance from these trials through intervention from on high, and with this goes the sense of dependence on a Savior-friend.

Finally, there is the hope of an ideal state to come, but founded from the beginning of human life—a heaven, a paradise. These three features are found, indeed, in all religions, and they remind us that there never has been, as there never can be, a religion that does not embrace in the end a philosophy of all being.

What has all this to do with Peter's confession that Jesus was the Messiah? Much in every way, but principally because in effect the confession connected the career of Jesus hopefully with those universal human feelings of need and longing for deliverance of which we have spoken, and because it made him personally the bearer of that deliverance. It placed Jesus, in effect, at the very heart of all the distracting problems that press for human solution and declared that he could supply the answer to them. To be sure, Peter could scarcely have been even dimly aware of this at that time. The confession was purely Jewish in its conscious purport. It pronounced Jesus a purely Jewish deliverer, and the disciples were very slow to perceive afterward a larger meaning in their faith, but none the less it prepared the way for the universalization of the Christian faith, because the Jewish messianic hope was the universal human hope intensified, purified, and exalted through the peculiar experiences of the Jewish people. A few words must now be said in further explanation and justification of this statement.

1. THE ORIGIN OF JEWISH APOCALYPTICISM

It was suggested above that in earlier stages of their life as a people the Israelites were so much like to the surrounding peoples in character that it would be

difficult to distinguish the qualities that made them excel. But in course of time, under the leadership of those men of deep moral insight and moral vision we call the prophets, they grew to be a nation enjoying as their distinctive dignity the consciousness of a relation to their God fundamentally different from that relation which other peoples conceived they bore to their gods. For while the popular view of the relation between the peoples and their gods was that of consanguinity or physical kinship, and while this inevitably involved the god in each case in the fate of his people, in the view of the prophets the national existence of Israel was based upon a mutual covenant between him and them to which, in the end, every individual Israelite was a partner. Thus the basis of their national life was moral rather than physical, because the covenant-relation is established by an act of choice rather than by physical necessity. This also made the continuance of their God Jahwe's protection of them dependent on their obedience to the terms of that covenant. Out of this relation arises the idea of law. It is quite in keeping with this whole conception that the prophets should constantly insist that the test of all action, both national and personal, was found in the law of their God, and that their well-being depended on their obedience to it. To attempt to trace the effects of this belief upon the spiritual life of the whole nation would carry us too far afield for our present purposes, but it is easy to understand how from this point of view there grew up in the minds of the people the conviction of the superiority of their God to all other gods and at the same time the sense of their own superiority to other peoples. The corollary of such a conviction is the

persuasion of their own indestructibility as a people. Other peoples might perish, but they could not because their God was above all gods. It was this belief that bore them up in their times of fearful struggle with nations or empires of far greater material power than they, and that gave them confidence that they should survive all defeats and be more than conquerors in the end. It was in support of this confidence that the prophets reinterpreted the popular lore of the race from the earliest ages with a view to showing that the course of all the peoples and of the material world from the beginning was directed in conformity with the purpose of God to select Israel as a people for himself and to give them ultimate supremacy over all others. With this object in mind they continually offered forecasts of a day of deliverance and triumph to come.

The eyes of the prophets were therefore upon the future. For them the true Golden Age, even if at times they did idealize the past, was yet to come. It seems that the people were fond of speaking of the coming "Day of Jahwe" when he should triumph for them over their enemies and his. The prophets were able to impart a profoundly moral character to this prospect. Their predictions of blessing for Israel in that day were interspersed with warnings; for while, as the people thought, it was to be a day of judgment on all nations, it was not less to be a day of judgment for Israel as well. It would bring retribution for the wicked as well as reward for the righteous. And that meant that there was to be a distinction made within Israel as truly as a distinction between Israel and other peoples. Indeed, in some prophetic utterances

the principle of righteous judgment seems to be applied indiscriminately as respects the different nations. Thus there rose up in the prophetic mind the overpowering conception of a great Judgment Day for the vindication of righteousness among all men—one of the great spiritual gifts of Israel to the world.

It might be expected that the successive overthrow of the Northern and Southern kingdoms of the Israelitish people, their captivity in foreign lands, their pitiable weakness on the economic side, and their political hopelessness would strain this fundamental conviction to the breaking-point. That they survived their downfall, that in the minds of many of the people of Judah their sense of moral superiority remained unimpaired, and their confidence in the ultimate salvation of the righteous stood firm, is one of the miracles of history. The effect of their bitter experiences was to intensify the confidence of the pious Jew in the power of his God. The darker their material and political outlook, the more fervent became their religious faith and hope. The Day of Jahwe would most surely come, but the deliverance it would bring should not be accomplished by the sword of Judah, but by the irresistible intervention of their God from on high. The day of judgment upon mankind should be a day of salvation for the suffering righteous.

It is evident that the misfortunes of these people occasioned a vast revolution in their religion. The destruction of the monarchy upon which the prophets had devoted so much of their energy in an attempt to keep the kings true to the higher faith, the obliteration of the political state, the exile from the land that they

called the land of Jahwe, the ruination of their sanctuaries and of the worship there, led to a spiritualization of their religious belief; the contact with Babylonian and Persian civilization broadened their horizon. A new world on high was opened to the eye of their imagination, and a vaster world on the earth spread before them. And consequently a new destiny lay beyond. Their God no longer dwelt in the temple made with hands or even in the land of Palestine but in the high heaven above them. They learned from Babylon and Persia to people that heaven with exalted beings whose nature was suited to the invisible better world, and whose business it was to act as the messengers of the unseen God and carry out his decrees on earth. All the so-called gods were no gods at all. The evident hopelessness of a struggle with the mighty empires whose power was made manifest to them every day, and the fading character of all material prosperity, turned their minds to the heaven. There the pious Jew fixed his gaze, and while the hope of a restoration of the earthly kingdom of Israel still lingered, the progress of events tended to give to this earthly kingdom more and more a miraculous character while it should last; but it came to be conceived by many a Jew as having only a limited duration and as destined to give place to a kingdom in the heaven that should last forever.

A new interest was henceforth taken in the present and future state of the dead. The old view that all men went to one place and met the same fate and that the present life was the scene of all punishment and reward passed with the passing of confidence in the perpetuity and worth of a political kingdom on earth and the rise

into prominence of the distinction of righteous and unrighteous within the nation. The righteous must have a place in the new kingdom. If that kingdom was to be ushered in by a judgment, then there must be a judgment for the dead as well as for the living. The idea of a resurrection of the dead came as a consolation to those who contended for the supremacy of righteousness; and with this the old idea of Sheol, as the final abode of all indiscriminately, gave way. Sheol could no longer be a place of hopelessness for all, or if Sheol was the place of the wicked there must be another abode for the righteous, though it was difficult to say where it should be before the resurrection. With this new interest in the dead arose many speculations and guesses about the unseen regions. There was no unanimity of opinion. But new regions began to appear—Heaven, Paradise, Sheol, Gehenna, were distinguished, but their relations were obscure. Whether there was to be a resurrection of all the dead for judgment or a resurrection of the righteous only was uncertain. With the incoming of Greek influence came a doubt of the reality or value of any resurrection or of any material kingdom. There was a tendency to spiritualize everything and to fix attention upon the hope of a life eternal in a purely spiritual world; but this view was probably that of the few. Yet amid all the differences of speculation there stood out clearly the firm belief in a coming universal judgment and end of the world. The latter was usually conceived as ushered in by a fire which should destroy the present order of things and the wicked with it.

There is one feature in this development of the Jewish religious spirit that claims our special interest, namely,

the expectation of the coming of a King-Messiah. In the earlier prophetic delineation of the glory of the coming kingdom there appeared from time to time pictures of an ideal king through whom their God would establish the power and prosperity of his people. The destruction of the two kingdoms and the subsequent exile rendered the fulfilment of the prophetic hope a physical impossibility. The nationalism of which the prophets were the spokesmen gradually faded away with the experiences of the captivity. It became to a large extent unnecessary. For the nationalism of the prophets was too narrow for those who gained the universalistic outlook upon the world and the spiritual interpretation of things that came through contact with the larger gentile views of existence. A great modification of the messianic expectation became necessary if it was to survive and minister to the religious life of men. The Messiah must take on a character in keeping with the new views of the world and of salvation. A mere son of David could never fulfil the functions of a Judge of all mankind and of the Ruler of a kingdom that came from heaven. He must be a heavenly being and, like the kingdom, must also descend from heaven to earth. Would he not live and reign forever? But here again there was much confusion. The old and the new mingled as the new seers sought to connect their new views with the old prophetic declarations. Sometimes the temporal kingdom receives no recognition whatever, but all is heavenly. The Messiah of such a kingdom would be a heavenly and eternal being. At one time (in Second Enoch) it is said that the kingdom will last a thousand years, or again (in Fourth Esdras) that it will last four hundred

years—corresponding to the four hundred years in Egypt—but the Messiah was to die at the close. Sometimes the expectation of a Messiah is entirely wanting, and Jahwe himself is the immediate deliverer of his people and Judge of the world. The Messiah is at one time a mighty monarch ruling all nations in righteousness, and again he is a co-sufferer with his people. Thus nationalism and universalism, materialism and spiritualism, were mingled in the post-exilian life of the Jews, and the minds of the people were divided.

In this rude survey of the spiritual development of the Jewish people we have covered many centuries and reached the times of Jesus himself. The advent of Jesus and his message to the world, directly or through his disciples, were contemporary with the later phases of this evolution. While, therefore, Peter's confession that Jesus was Messiah connects Jesus with the ideas outlined above, it does not determine which of these various and conflicting views of the character of the coming kingdom, of the manner of its establishment, and of the end of the world were uppermost or even present in the minds of his followers. This much, however, is plain—that the new faith obtained the formulas of its expression through the conceptions whose development we have sought to outline. We shall now attempt to state why we have described this view of things by the term Apocalypticism.

2. PRINCIPAL FEATURES OF JEWISH APOCALYPTICISM

The contact with Babylonian and Persian culture in the earlier period following upon the destruction of the Jewish state and the contact with Greek culture in the

later period—to mention only the most important foreign influences—gave a powerful stimulus to the Jewish intellect and vastly widened its horizon. Babylonian astrology and Persian dualism gave to the Jews a new knowledge of the world, and Grecian thought gave them a new view of its meaning. This intellectual expansion was accompanied by a deepening of their moral and religious life. This came to them as a consolation for their terrible losses. Two real worlds, the heaven and the earth, besides the shadowy realm of Sheol, or the underworld, now came into view. Man is of the earth, and his days are few. But Jahwe God is in the high heaven above all earthly things and free from all earthly contingencies. There he lives and reigns eternally. Superhuman beings serve him there. He rules also on the earth, and the angels of his power go forth from his presence bearing his decrees and effecting his purposes on the earth. All events that occur on the earth are determined in advance in heaven. So to say, that which took place on earth was first enacted in heaven and must inevitably come to pass. If men could but enter heaven, or if the veil that separates heaven from earth could be withdrawn for a time, men would be able to see beforehand the things which are to come to pass. What is true of the earth is also true of the underworld, for Jahwe is lord there also and predetermines the fate of its denizens. Thus there lies before men the possibility of obtaining a knowledge of the distant future.

The possibility becomes an actuality. The new world becomes the basis of a new view of human knowledge. Men have actually witnessed the lifting of the

veil between heaven and earth. There have been apocalypses, revelations, of those things that happen in heaven. Men have had visions of that realm and they have heard voices speaking to them from it. The disclosures that came to men in this way are not to be classed with things that they learn in the ordinary manner. The sight and the hearing they enjoyed were special gifts bestowed upon the few. They were the seers, the prophets of their God. This knowledge was not merely natural but, as we are accustomed to say, supernatural, miraculous. It was certain that they who obeyed the heavenly vision should infallibly be blessed. The word that came from heaven could not fail.

Moreover, the apocalypses disclosed the secret causes of the events for whose coming believers were to look so hopefully. They belonged to the same order as the knowledge concerning them. They were not brought about through the normal working of those things we see about us, but by the special act, the determining will, of God. Apart from this they could not happen. If God thus intervened by his mighty power to bring to pass things that would be otherwise impossible, then the tremendous events which the seers were now foretelling and which seemed so contrary to expectation—the descent of the Messiah from heaven, the resurrection from the dead, the assembling of all mankind for judgment, the burning of the world and the wicked with it, and the creation of a new world for the righteous or the taking of them up into heaven—would surely occur. Here, then, their religious faith found its firm support. With such a basis of confidence an oppressed and impoverished people could bid defiance to all the powers of this

world or the world beneath. These are the themes of the Jewish apocalyptic.

It is a very striking feature of those Jewish apocalypses which have been committed to writing that they are all pseudonymous. The writers conceal their personal authorship under the name of some accredited prophet or worthy of the past. Such names as Enoch, the Twelve Patriarchs, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezra, are attached to the apocalypses. What is the secret of this self-effacement? It could not have been simply a means of avoiding the danger of identification which is often so real to the writers among an oppressed people. It must have been mainly for the sake of securing for their messages the credence that attached to the utterances of men who were commonly regarded as special messengers of their God—men who had seen the heavenly things and spoke by the spirit of Jahwe. That is to say, the authors of the Jewish apocalyptic firmly believed that their own utterances were revelations from heaven, visions given by God, and they sought to persuade their readers of the same by attributing their works to men in whom the people already believed. This brings out another very interesting fact related to the production of Jewish apocalyptic. We shall indicate it.

The apocalyptic writings cover, roughly speaking, a period of time stretching from the second century before Christ to the end of the first Christian century. The events of the times before the captivity were now far back in the past. The common tendency among men to idealize the past was accentuated among the Jews of these later days through the contrast with their former

condition. Those patriotic statesmen of the former days who gave a moral interpretation of Israel's history and attempted to direct the policy of the state by their forecasts of coming changes were now among the national heroes. They had foretold the things that had come to pass. They were inspired of Jahwe. They had had visions of the heavenly things. The things which eye saw not and ear heard not and which entered not into the heart of the common man had been revealed to them. If the prophets had foretold the things which had already come to pass, why should they not also have foretold the things which were even yet to come? And so the new seers, believing that they too had visions given them by God, disclaimed all honor for themselves and ascribed their experiences to the acknowledged sages of the past in order to establish the hearts of the people in the confidence that the things which they had seen in vision were really about to occur. This use of the works of the ancient prophets was possible through the collection of their writings by the learned and devout scribes of the people. They had not hesitated to attach the names of known prophets to writings whose authorship was unknown in order to preserve those works and secure for the whole body of the collected writings the veneration that would insure the loyal obedience of the people. That is to say, the scribes had already made a virtual canon of scripture, a collection of the utterances of men whose word was the word of God, the words of men who were given a knowledge inaccessible to others. Jewish Apocalypticism leans for support upon a canon of inspired scripture.

We may now briefly summarize the results of our study to this point. First, Jewish Apocalypticism is an

outcome of the doctrine of a dual world, the earth and the heaven above the earth. There was also a shadowy underworld obscurely related to the heaven, but like it in that it was ordinarily invisible. Secondly, it was a doctrine of the predetermination of all events by the irresistible decretive will of God, a doctrine of divine predestination. Thirdly, it was a doctrine of human knowledge of future events by means of supernatural vision, a theory of the knowledge of the invisible. Fourthly, it was a universalistic interpretation of human history in contrast with the narrower nationalism of the ancient prophets, and it thereby carried with it the enfranchisement of the individual. Finally, Apocalypticism offered a moral interpretation of all human history. Everything was viewed from the standpoint of a universal and final day of judgment (the idea of a canon of inspired scripture is intimately associated with Apocalypticism, but is not essential to it). If these things are so, Apocalypticism, so far from being a degenerate offspring of prophetism, was the very flower of prophetism and brings the era of Jewish prophecy to a close.

3. APOCALYPTICISM IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY

We turn once more to the Petrine confession. The pronouncement that Jesus was the Messiah, while it did not determine which of the many different views that were current in Jewish apocalyptic was to become the Christian view, did finally interpret the mission of Jesus through the general apocalyptical view of the world and of human life. Apocalyptic became the native air in which early Christianity lived and breathed. It pro-

vided for the new age the answer to the question of the meaning of the career of Jesus, his relation to the all-determining will of God, and his relation to the destiny of mankind universally. Apocalyptic became for Jewish believers, and to a large extent for generations of gentile believers after them, the determinate mode of expressing the Christian faith. So closely do the cast of thought in the Jewish apocalyptic and the prevailing thought in the New Testament coincide that to the reader who is unacquainted with the Jewish Apocrypha, and whose knowledge of these ancient people is drawn wholly from the Old and the New Testament, it must have seemed, as he read the foregoing account of the character of Jewish Apocalypticism, that it was derived directly from the New Testament.

The books of our New Testament came almost entirely, if not altogether, from the hands of Jewish believers in the messiahship of Jesus, and they are addressed to readers most of whom are presupposed to be familiar with Jewish thought. So far as the general type of thought is concerned, nothing stands out more prominently than the fact of our having before us there a Christian recast of the Jewish apocalyptic. This is a matter that claims our attention somewhat in detail.

First of all, the New Testament is thoroughly charged with the consciousness of the contrast between two worlds, heaven and earth (with also a vague recognition of a real lower world different from both). The contrast turns in favor of the heaven. The interest and hope of believers are concentrated there. The presence and activity of God on earth and among men do not alter the fact that he is pre-eminently in heaven. The words

of the invocation so dear to all Christendom make it indisputable: "Our father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." From thence came the Christ to earth and thither he has returned, to come a second time. Whether it be Matthew or Paul or John who speaks, it is the same. The conception is more or less realistic in all, and the very foundation of the Christian hope seems at times to lie there. Believers' expectations of future blessedness are made to depend on the reality of that heaven, for they hope to be raised from their graves or to ascend from the surface of the earth at the coming of Christ to be with him—though this is not the invariable way of putting it, and sometimes the language seems to be symbolic rather than literally descriptive.

The denizens of these worlds are clearly distinguished, and for the most part easily recognized. Angels of God from heaven frequently appeared to the sight of believing men, speaking to them, assisting them in their tasks or ministering to their comfort and well-being. Demons from the lower world were also banefully active everywhere, afflicting men with ills or deceiving and beguiling them into sin—though there are no references to their visibility. Life is sometimes represented as a constant battle with these hidden foes, for while their home was in the underworld their operations were on the earth or even in the heights above where the good angels are. Hence the moral conflicts in which men were engaged might appear as pitched battles with monstrous spiritual forces in the higher regions. As Paul puts it—"Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of

wickedness in the heavenly places." What a dignity and grandeur was thereby attached to our human, moral struggles! Jesus had the angels of God at his command, and to him and his followers they rendered service. It will not do to call this mere religious rhetoric, for in those times it all seemed very real.

So profoundly impressed were these first-century believers with the reality of their heritage in that higher world that the hope of the messianic kingdom, which they had inherited from the Jews, was conceived no longer, after the manner of the prophets, as growing up out of better moral conditions on the earth, but as the expectation of a city-state that should descend to earth out of the skies after the evil world had been destroyed. The imagery of the New Testament, when these themes are discussed, is most impressive. For vividness and magnificence these portrayals have never been excelled. And no wonder, because the stake was the most momentous possible. No effort was spared to excite and sustain the expectation of a speedy apocalypse of the Redeemer from on high. Striking references to this hope are found almost everywhere. We quote a single passage from one of the letters of Paul: "For our citizenship is in heaven: from whence also we look for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things to himself."

When we turn to the accounts of the manner in which the gospel was proclaimed from the first the apocalyptical cast of thought is equally manifest. Visions, dreams, voices, and visitants from the heavenly realm are

frequent accompaniments of the early preaching. These were the seals of the divine authority of the message. Thus it is no cause of surprise if the conceptions, convictions, and reasonings of the speakers and writers were often viewed by them as direct impartations from heaven and incomparably higher in worth than the natural thoughts of men. In what other way was it open to them to affirm that they believed that the new life they were living was itself the life divine? The question which would trouble us today—how such things were psychologically possible—seems never to have occurred to them. The nearest they came to it was by referring their higher thoughts to the inner working of the Spirit of God on their minds. Many pages might be filled with quotations illustrative of the Apocalypticism of the New Testament writers. A few references must suffice.

If we turn to the accounts of the birth of Jesus, we find the occurrences connected with it represented as the outcome of action from a higher divine world and not from the human will itself. For example, Matthew says: "Now the birth of Jesus was on this wise: when his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit." Then passing to Joseph's situation he adds: "But when he thought on these things, behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ..." And so the account continues. Magi from the East are guided to the young child by a moving star, and they return to their country by a different route because of a warning from God by a dream. By a dream Joseph is directed to take the child to Egypt, by a dream he is told by an angel to return, and by a dream he is warned to go

to Galilee. This is the manner in which the early Christians expressed their confidence that Jesus had come to the world by the predetermining will of God, and that the earthly events pertaining thereto had been similarly ordered by God. In Luke's account the representations of heavenly intervention are even more vivid. Angelic messengers, divine inspirations, voices from the sky, signalize the advent of the expected Messiah. Or if we turn to the accounts of the death and resurrection of Jesus, we are equally impressed with the vigor of the apocalypses. Earthquakes, appearings of the dead to the living, the deeds and words of heavenly angels, startling appearings of Jesus himself, attest the truth of the faith in him and prove the supernatural character of his mission. Or, again, if we take the accounts of his ministry, they are studded with occurrences of intervention from another world. A notable instance is the transfiguration. We quote from Mark:

> And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter and James and John and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them, and his garments became glistering, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them. And there appeared unto them Elijah and Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answereth and saith unto Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. . . . . And there came a cloud overshadowing them; and there came a voice out of the cloud: This is my beloved Son: hear ye him. And suddenly looking round about, they saw no one any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

This manner of narration is quite generally characteristic of the whole of the accounts of Jesus' career. They are cast in the mold of a belief in heavenly apocalypses. Everything is conceived miraculously. Now, to remove

the miraculous elements from the story is to rob it of its peculiar power. It is not for us to seek to modernize these narratives by excising the overt interventions. That would be an act of violence destructive of the peculiar merits of the gospel records. While these accounts would sound very artificial if produced in our times, they were entirely natural to the minds of religious men in those times.

It is, therefore, perfectly in keeping with the spirit of those times that Jesus should commonly express his mind in the forms of apocalyptic. There is scarcely an utterance of his of any length which does not embrace apocalyptical elements, and it is just what we might expect when we find him offering his disciples startling and impressive apocalyptical discourses before he suffered. As elsewhere, wars, pestilences, cleaving heavens, falling stars, visible descent of the Son of Man from heaven, and the judgment of the world are outstanding features. The great Apocalypse of John which stands at the end of our canon is, in its general spirit and mode of utterance, quite in harmony with the remainder of the Jewish material in our New Testament. It is a paean of coming triumph for Christians over their oppressive foes and the unseen forces of the regions of Evil. This concatenation of visions demonstrates the unconquerableness of the primitive faith. Taking for granted the dualistic cosmology, the belief that happenings on earth were predetermined by heavenly enactments, the belief that disclosures of the future outworking of the divine will are made to men through supernatural means, and the assurance that Jesus was the appointed King of the ages bound to overthrow the power of evil in the world, it is difficult

to conceive a more effective vindication of the early Christian faith than this book offers.

It would not be well to pass to later periods of Christian history without pointing out that the New Testament contains many elements of a different character from the Jewish apocalyptic. As the Christian gospel was carried into distant portions of the Roman Empire and beyond, it met types of spirituality very different from the Jewish. The spirit of the Graeco-Roman philosophy of religion, especially in Gnosticism, and the Roman conception of world-government were mighty forces to be reckoned with by any propaganda that sought to become world-wide. The Christian gospel had to adjust itself to the new demands these made upon it and proved its world-dominating power by so doing. We shall speak later of the manner in which this was accomplished. It is sufficient at this point simply to state that already with New Testament times this work of assimilating ethnic spirituality had begun. The writings of Paul and John and the Epistle to the Hebrews are evidences. But it should be noted that even in those portions where the ethnic spirit is manifest the spirit of the apocalyptic survives and mingles with the other. We see it in the Pauline letters to the Colossians and the Ephesians. The writer, with all his ideas of the immanence of the divine and with his readiness to make use of the Gnostic cosmology, still thinks very largely in the terms of the Jewish apocalyptic. We see it in the Gospel of John, where the high mysticism and spirituality of the writer have not yet led him to abandon Apocalypticism. We see it also in Hebrews, where Alexandrian philosophy with all its allegorism has not succeeded in doing away

with a literal heaven above the earth, the actual ascent of Jesus into it, and his future real descent. We conclude, therefore, our study of the early Christain interpretation of Christianity by saying that, so far as the books of the New Testament disclose it to us, that interpretation is throughout prevailingly apocalyptical.

4. APOCALYPTICISM IN CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT CREEDS

An account of the influence of this interpretation of Christianity upon the life and thought of the ancient Greek church, the mediaeval Roman church, and modern Protestant churches, together with the controversies and divisions connected with the struggle between it and successive modernizations of it, would fill a volume. We must content ourselves with little more than a bare mention of those features of it which have persisted among the majority of Christians.

It was not possible that the peoples of the Near East with their native spirit of piety of the metaphysical or mystical sort should, on becoming Christians, immediately abandon that which had been sewn into their natures for centuries so as to become the warp and woof of their inner life and that Jewish Apocalypticism should be substituted for it. That would be an act of violence. Neither was it possible for the great church which was growing up and seeking to justify its claim to be the true and sole heir to the Christian tradition either to repudiate the early apocalyptic or rewrite it. The only thing that was possible if the church was to maintain its claims and retain all classes of believers within its bosom was that the traditional apocalyptic and the new philosophy should be written down together without an attempt to

reconcile them or an acknowledgment that a reconciliation was needed. The retention of the primitive apocalyptic was all the more imperative since there was a growing belief that the writings of apostolic men were new "scriptures" and therefore an authoritative declaration of truth, a law of faith for all time. Thus it came about that when the church drew up her creed the new philosophy and the old interpretation of the apocalypticists were placed side by side. In all the successive developments of the Nicene Creed of the ancient Catholic church there is reiterated the confession of the expectation that Jesus Christ who had "ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of the Father" was to "come again with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end." It is also affirmed: "I look for the resurrection of the dead," which is presently interpreted to mean, "the resurrection of the body," so as to set aside positively all spiritualizations of that portion of the creed.

When the Western church became Roman it was still farther from possibility that the apocalyptical interpretation should suffice. For the church had now consciously assumed the burden of responsibility for the task of renovating by normal means the very world of whose future Apocalypticism had despaired. Yet the Roman church was compelled, equally with the Greek church, to retain the ancient apocalyptical confession. But this Apocalypticism was no dead letter of the law of faith in this instance. On the contrary, it became a powerful instrument for impressing the popular mind with the transcendent worth of the moral implications of the Christian faith. The approach of the day of universal

judgment, the resurrection of the dead in the body, the irrevocable sentence to heaven or hell, became the ground of those mighty appeals to the imagination and the conscience which have enabled the Roman church to hold its millions in leash. At the same time, also, the idea of a spiritual, miraculous, and exclusive communication of truth to chosen men became an instrument for fastening upon the people the claims of the church to obedience.

Protestantism, with its biblicism and its insistence upon the restoration of the primitive faith in its purity, opened the door to a fuller restoration of Apocalypticism than Romanism permitted. It is true that the Protestant insistence upon the sole authority of the Scriptures has prevented a recrudescence among Protestants, to any appreciable extent, of the visions and trances that were so deeply cherished by Catholic pietists, but it logically demanded the restoration of the whole primitive view of things. That it did not commonly go so far among Protestants was owing to the strength of their moral convictions and their practical good sense. Nevertheless it did pave the way for a repeated recrudescence of millenarianism with its pessimistic view of the world. From this Protestantism still suffers in many quarters, but, on the whole, it is to be said that Protestants have been content to use only those portions of ancient apocalyptic which were the main basis of the Catholic appeal to the minds of the people, namely, the factual representation of the coming, the ascent, and the return of Jesus (in the distant future), the day of judgment, the resurrection, the end of the world, and a literal heaven and hell. In one other respect Apocalypticism persists among

Protestants. Their repudiation of an immanent authority in the church in favor of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures tended to establish in the Protestant churches the view that the saving truth of religion is communicated to men through supranatural channels of transmission which are not to be subjected to the canons of our ordinary thinking. It is only in recent times that this feature of Apocalypticism has been giving way.

5. VALUE OF APOCALYPTICISM

We shall conclude the discussion of our subject with an estimate. Apocalypticism as an interpretation of Christianity has a fourfold merit: First, it affirms the reality of an unseen world. In this it makes response to a profound longing of the human heart. For among all enlightened peoples who have reflected deeply on the meaning of life, the transitory nature of the goods of this present world and their failure to satisfy the deepest longings of the heart have become proverbial. The spirit of man longs for the eternal and unchangeable, the city which has foundations, the things that cannot be shaken, whose goods, once attained, are ours forever. Such a world, if destined to be ours, would not only secure for us release from the pangs of failure and disappointment here, but the expectation of it would impart a spirit of resignation in the midst of present distresses. The records of Christian piety abound in proofs of this ministry of Apocalypticism. The persecuted in all the Christian centuries have borne unequivocal testimony to the sustaining power of the confidence in the reality of that better world. The belief in the reality of the visions men have had of that world has aided the minds of the

unreflecting to reach an experience of peace, in striking contrast to the restlessness that springs from unaided speculation.

But this has not proved to be an unmixed good. The low estimate of this present world by contrast has often led to a disparagement of the common tasks of life, a lack of sympathy for those whose lot is inextricably bound to material things, and a generally pessimistic and censorious spirit. Earth is too often regarded only in its contrast with a heaven, and man only in his contrast with God. In its theory of the higher knowledge Apocalypticism exhibits another weakness. For by its depreciation of our ordinary thinking on religious subjects and its reference of all divine truth to supranatural means of communication open, as a matter of fact, to the favored few only, it has tended to the creation of a religious aristocracy and to a depreciation of scientific investigation and philosophic inquiry. Where Apocalypticism has flourished there has been almost invariably a corresponding low estimate of the value of the native working of our minds and a shrinking from the severer tasks of learning. In short, by its predication of two separate worlds and its claims to a supranatural knowledge Apocalypticism tends to bisect our human life, to destroy its unity, and to make a free natural communion between God and man impossible.

Secondly, Apocalypticism has the merit of affirming a purposive, divine government of the world. It lifts the whole of human life above the realm of chance. It leaves no room for fatalism or the idea that the course of the world is a meaningless round of happenings. Moreover, it attaches a dignity to human affairs by holding

that in the midst of all complexity and seeming confusion there is an end toward which all moves, and therefore there is order. Hence also the power of foresight and predetermination so characteristic of men is recognized as of like nature with the supreme power in the universe. There is therefore a dignity attached to human actions both good and bad.

But this merit of Apocalypticism is seriously compromised by its conception of the manner in which this divine end is attained. The world is supposed to be controlled from without, and its history has too arbitrary a character to permit us a reasoned view of its course. If the natural course of things is to be subjected, without warning, to interference from without, and nature's laws either do not exist as laws or they may be set aside at any time by fiat from on high, then the mode of the divine government of the world is contrary to that which now commends itself to us in political circles as worthy of our allegiance today.

Thirdly, Apocalypticism by its picture of a great judgment day stands for the supremacy and finality of righteousness in the affairs of men. The expectation of such an event imparts a necessary sternness in the presence of crime. It tends to support the affirmations of the human conscience and to raise the moral powers of our nature to their rightful supremacy. It sets aside as frivolous every theory that tends to belittle the human personality, and it stamps as damnable every attempt to rob men of their moral initiative and responsibility. It tends, therefore, to confirm and to purify the efforts of civic communities to establish methods of unswerving justice in the government of the people.

On the other hand, it may be doubted whether the postponement of the day of judgment to the distant future does not tend to a legalistic view of our relations to God and to an obscuration of the truth that the execution of divine justice is immanent in human life, that the judgment day is now. It has thus indirectly supported conceptions of salvation that represent it as an unnatural resort to special provisions for escaping at last the consequences of sins. Its views of life are serious, indeed, but not serious enough.

Fourthly, Christian Apocalypticism has the merit of standing for the supreme worth of the personality of Jesus Christ as interpretative of the worth of our human personality and as the divine ideal which is to conquer the world. But by regarding him as coming into our world in unnatural ways from without, as accepting our earthly condition only for an interval and as now occupying a realm altogether different from ours, it is open to the charge of making him appear like an accident in human history, and in the end as having only a partial kinship with us. The outcome must be a loss of confidence in the value of the hope of being like him here.

It becomes a question for the modern Christian how far he may hold to those eternal realities set forth in Apocalypticism, how far he can be Christian and yet decline to be bound by the modes of thought and utterance so largely characteristic of the early Christian believers. Are we not more loyal to Jesus Christ and the faith he gave to men if we set aside as temporary the forms of that faith which cannot commend themselves to our best judgment and sincerest trust and at the same

time seek to retain and fulfil the spirit of his life than if we regard the spirit as bound to the letter? Apocalypticism was a natural mode of thought in early Christian days, but has it not become unnatural for our days? Do we not prove false to the inner spirit of Christianity if we continue to retain it?

CHAPTER II

CATHOLICISM

It is always hazardous for one who does not accept a place within a given religious communion to attempt a characterization of it. He seems to be at a disadvantage compared with a member of that communion. In the case of Catholicism the disadvantage is negligible, because the complex of forces and events comprised within it covers a period of eighteen centuries and affects vast areas of the earth and countless millions of people. On the other hand, the interpreter who has personally felt the impact of the religious power that is resident in Catholicism but does not feel any compulsion to justify its claims has a distinct advantage.

The word "catholic" is from the Greek and means universal. Its employment as a designation of a Christian communion seems to have occurred for the first time in the second century of the Christian era. The Christian gospel had been preached widely in the Roman Empire and beyond, with the result that many local religious associations had been formed under the Christian name but differing so widely in the traditions, customs, and doctrines they held that there was danger lest the new faith be shipwrecked in the storm of general religious confusion. Many there were who strove to hold to the original, simple, but picturesque message of the early Jewish preachers. Others welcomed the new faith as furnishing older popular faiths with a higher

meaning and sought for a philosophic comprehension of it. Others, again, tried a middle way. Controversy and division multiplied. There was danger lest the gospel be lost in a medley of realities, speculations, fancies, and superstitions. It was amid these circumstances that, under the leadership of such men as Ignatius of Antioch and Irenaeus of Lyons, an effort was put forth to stem the tendency toward disintegration by laying down a few broad statements purporting to be the invariable tradition held by the true churches the world over and constituting the apostolic standard of truth. In this respect, they said, the churches were all at one; in fact, they were one church. This one church —the church catholic—was alone the true church. Differences, therefore, came from without. Universalism was set up against individualism, authority against speculation and discovery, law against freedom. This is the beginning of Catholicism.

During these eighteen centuries Catholicism has passed through three main stages of development. In those early times, when its main strength lay in the regions adjacent to the Eastern Mediterranean, where the Greek language was the principal medium for the exchange of ideas and Greek-speaking Christians were the principal leaders in the thought and action of Christendom, there grew up the Eastern, or Greek, church, so called, with its cultivation of "mysteries," its profound metaphysical speculations, its great creeds, and its episcopal organization. Later, when the faith spread through Western Europe, and its center of gravity was found at Rome, the custom of the Roman church became the standard for the West, and in the work of reducing

the new threatening chaos to order there grew up the great mediaeval system of ecclesiastical administration with its headquarters in the "Eternal City" and its agents in every political center and every public place. Here stood the Western, or Roman, church over against the Eastern, or Greek, church, with a deep cleavage between them. Finally, when the free national, industrial, commercial, intellectual, moral, and religious forces that had been kept for a time in subjection by the Roman church got beyond control and in Protestantism found a larger life outside the Church of Rome, she found herself mainly occupied in retaining the allegiance of those who still remained within her communion and in resisting Protestant attacks. Then appeared the reactionary, conservative, anti-modernist papal church of the present. Thus Catholicism has passed through three great stages. The schism between East and West made two mutually antagonistic churches, both of which, nevertheless, claimed to be Catholic. Then the Protestant revolution brought into existence many anti-Catholic Christian bodies that have disputed successfully with her the sovereignty of the Western world. Catholicism and universality have long since ceased to be synonyms. Catholicism is now a name designating a sect.

Notwithstanding the wide differences that have appeared within Catholicism during these many centuries, there still remains a link of identity uniting the past and the present, and the most striking characteristics of Catholicism from the beginning remain. In discovering these we must remember that, while there is much of keen invention in Catholicism, the system is not so much an invention as a growth. For convenience

let us consider it in its four main aspects—as a type of piety or religious life, as a form of morality or conduct, as an institutional system or church, and as a philosophy or body of doctrine.

1. CATHOLICISM AS A TYPE OF RELIGIOUS LIFE

In this study we shall beware of drawing our inferences mainly from official acts and pronouncements, but we shall remember that the heart of Catholicism, like every other kind of religion, is found in the minds of the multitudes of its common people. Its rites and ceremonies, its rules and regulations for action, its great institutions, and its doctrines have come into being in response to real or imagined popular needs or demands. What, then, is the kind of piety that is cultivated among the Catholic masses?

Observe, at the outset, the attention that is paid to worship. There are its places of worship, all constructed, as far as possible, with a view to arousing and cultivating certain emotions—its churches, basilicas, and cathedrals erected on eminences or other conspicuous sites, with lofty towers and spires pointing heavenward, with massive walls and lordly pillars, with spacious assembly rooms, long-drawn aisles, high ceilings, and softly dimmed light, with their far-off, railed-in altars, burning candles, and floating incense. All these have a meaning that cannot be set forth in mathematics or the formulas of science or in the terms of common utilitarian purposes, for they tell of movements of the secret soul within the man.

There are its objects of worship. They are many, as in polytheism and idolatry, but with a difference.

Foremost and above all they worship God as one God but in three persons—whatever those words may mean—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is the highest kind of worship, known as *latria*, which we may translate "adoration," and is offered to God alone. In this worship there is no familiarity, but that deep submission and silence of the spirit as it views as from afar the Incomprehensible and Infinite who cannot be known in himself but only in his persons or the manifestations of his essence. Lower than this worship is *dulia*, or the service and veneration which may be rendered to those lower beings whom God has signally honored and through whom he manifests a portion of his glories. First of these is the Virgin Mary, who receives *hyperdulia*, or the higher veneration given to those who are only less than the divine. Saints, or holy men and women, in great number are objects of this lower worship and through them both prayer and praise are offered to God. When the heart, depressed with its sense of sin, fears to enter into the divine presence, it turns to those who have sinned as we have and yet have been purified and importunes their intercessions with God. The demand for these mediators is constant in Catholicism, for it seems that without them there is a lack of the sense of the mercy of God. New saints are being canonized from time to time, altars and shrines are being erected to them where their votaries may find the blessing of fellowship with them and their help. From this step easily follows the consecration of holy places, holy articles, and holy relics which tend to awaken the pious feelings of the Catholic votary and to assure him of the divine favor.

In keeping with these are the modes of worship. In order to excite the appropriate emotions, statues or shrines are erected in honor of the Savior and great saints, and before these the devotee prostrates himself or presents his offerings in order to find favor and peace. Pictures are suspended in places of devotion, representing the deeds or sufferings of Jesus or Mary or other hallowed persons, and by gazing upon these the desired benefit is obtained. A similar effect is produced by looking upon or touching the relics of saints and martyrs. Or, without the use of a material image, the soul may be excited to high impulse by meditating on the happiness of the blest in paradise or the miseries of the wicked in hell or of those whose crimes are to be expiated in purgatory. Again, a series of devotional acts may be prescribed, such as the repetition of a prayer many times in succession, perhaps with the help of beads to keep the count. But chief of all the methods of arousing the spirit of devotion is the performance of sacraments. These cannot be spoken of here in detail, but mention may be made particularly of the sacrament of the Eucharist with its culmination in the Mass. The supreme miracle is witnessed by the beholder when he sees the Host elevated before God as the sublimest act of self-sacrifice and devotion and feels that in it Christ is being still offered to God and the offering is accepted. So long as the sacrifice of the Mass is continued, so long is the soul for whom it is offered in the way of salvation. It is quite in keeping with this practice that crucifixes are distributed among the people in order that the remembrance of the suffering of Christ for them may stir their hearts to love and gratitude.

It is characteristic of the Catholic worship that the human and the divine are conceived as brought together, not in a natural way—for they are not conceived as naturally one—but in a supernatural way. The philosophy which underlies and supports this view will be referred to later. Meanwhile this outstanding feature of Catholicism is to be kept in mind. In keeping with this the emotions characteristic of Catholic piety fall into two main classes, namely, those connected with the idea of the divine and those connected with the idea of the human. When the human and the divine are conceived as united, as in Christ, there is excited the feeling of tender sympathy and compassion. The human career of Jesus abounds in events that invite the worshiper to try to imitate his deeds and repeat in himself the very emotions that Jesus felt, even in his agonies connected with the crucifixion. Here, however, the divine in the human is what gives sanctity to the experiences of the sufferer and makes them valuable for men. The worshiper is willing to go the way of the cross with Jesus and share his sufferings. Thus the suffering Redeemer God becomes the center of devotion:

> O sacred Head now wounded, with grief and shame weighed down,
> Now scornfully surrounded with thorns, thy only crown!
> O sacred Head, what glory, what bliss till now was thine!
> Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call thee mine.

The unity with Jesus which the Catholic seeks is an emotional unity.

When the divine is regarded as separated from the human, it creates the feeling of awe or fear and foreboding. Thus even Jesus Christ becomes a dread judge

whose sentence is feared and whom the worshiper seeks to placate through the intercessions of Mary and the saints. If God is adored as Father, he is not so much the Father of men as the First Person of the Holy Trinity, the Father of the Son, unknown to any but through the Son, and too far away for comfort to flow from the thought of him. The Holy Spirit is not so much a joyful presence in the soul as the mysterious inspirer and renewer, also beyond and away.

The contemplation of human nature apart from the divine excites emotions of unhappiness, self-contempt, or revulsion. It is the opposite of the divine, whether, as in the Eastern church, it be viewed as the finite, ignorant, erring, and perishable over against the infinitude, omniscience, holiness, and immortality of God; or whether, as in the Western church, it be viewed more particularly as the disobedient, selfish, impure, and guilty transgressor of the divine law. Consequently the Catholic feels that human nature is to be repressed and humiliated, and he may resort to the wearing of filthy garments and the neglect or the affliction of his body so as to reduce it to subjection to the spirit. Whatever human nature may have been at the creation, it is now fallen and corrupt, and ought to be despised in the presence of the divine.

Thus the Catholic emotional experience oscillates between two poles, the sublime contemplation of Deity far removed from men and their ways, producing both a longing after God and a shrinking from his presence, and the dissatisfaction and disgust produced by the consciousness of human weakness and sin—fitting anticipations of the vision of heaven and hell in a world to come.

This emotional contrast is both the strength and the weakness of Catholicism—its strength, because it begets in some those all-consuming aspirations which enable them to endure the greatest privations and to reach the highest achievements in the way of mental concentration; its weakness, in that the constant uncertainty and vacillation prevent the power of initiative from making itself supreme in the life, but leave men ready tools for the purposes of others.

What, then, is the character of Catholic hopes and aspirations? The deep sense of the reality of another world, unseen by man and separated from this world by a veil that no natural power of human vision can pierce—a world whose reality is the opposite of this world, whose worth is infinite and eternal in contrast with the fleeting and delusive character of the things in this present world—issues in the desire and hope of receiving here and now some token or sign from that world, some gift of good that more than makes up for the loss of all things here. Hence the cherishing of belief in voices, visions, dreams, apparitions, signs, and omens coming from the better world into ours. But the inevitable disappointments that must weaken these aspirations lead to a seeking for some tangible or visible instrument or vehicle for the transmission of the heavenly gifts, and, consequently, there arises a superstitious regard for certain places, articles, outward acts, days, or seasons that carry with them some secret and mysterious blessing. High spirituality and a low materialism are ill-matched companions, but they are commonly found side by side in the Catholic type of religion.

2. CATHOLICISM AS A TYPE OF MORALITY OR A FORM OF CONDUCT

The dualism that is characteristic of the religious spirit of Catholicism reappears in its morality, and naturally so, since morality at its highest is true religion. As in Catholic piety there is seen the union of high spiritualistic devotion and a crass materialistic worship, so also in its morality, alongside of exclusive devotion to the aims that spring out of the sense of the supreme worth of the invisible world, there is a place for a low compromise with sordidness and sensuality. There is room both for the ascetic and for the worldling.

In order to understand Catholic morality we must first apprehend its ideal of life. It is suggested by such scriptures as the following: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth . . . . but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." "Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on." "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it." "And every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands for my sake shall receive a hundred fold and shall inherit eternal life." "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. . . . . For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and

this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying, Death is swallowed up in victory." "If ye live after the flesh ye must die, but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body ye shall live." "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." Ever before the high Catholic imagination there floats the image of "the city that hath the foundations whose builder and maker is God," the city that is lightened by the glory of God and into which "there shall in no wise enter anything unclean." The Catholic "saints" are the men and women who have abandoned everything for this higher state into which they hope to come.

There can be little doubt that it was the sufferings, and especially the martyrdoms, of the early generations of Christians that gave this ideal its pre-eminence. Great was the exercise of soul through which those devoted people succeeded in holding fast to their faith in the presence of some awful form of death. The highest exercise of faith seemed to appear in the act of renouncing life itself. Thus the martyr became the ideal Christian. The strain and excitement of those days led to the semi-worship of martyrs and the veneration of their relics. Paganism and Christianity were fused. Other-worldliness became the characteristic Christian virtue, and it was especially manifested in the grace of renunciation. When times of great prosperity came to the Christian community and the growth of worldliness became a source of alarm to the purer spirits, there was in consequence an artificial attempt to preserve the martyr ideal and to fulfil it even when there was no persecution of men to the death. Where suffering was not compulsorily

forced upon them from without, it might nevertheless be enforced from within. The value of voluntary suffering was exalted and salvation was made dependent upon it.

Naturally, therefore, the suffering Savior became the example of the highest morality. His renunciation of his heavenly glory, his renunciation of the goods of earth, his want even of a place to lay his head, his renunciation of natural kinships, and, finally, his renunciation, on the cross of shame, of his own pure life involved a demand upon all his followers that they also should suffer voluntarily—for so did he. The mediaeval Christ was the Divine Sufferer and the mediaeval Christian was he who suffered with him and for him. Suffering was glorified. The meritoriousness of voluntary suffering and the cleansing power of penitential suffering became axioms of mediaeval ethics.

The life of the ancient hermit became the real model. Retirement from the world, abandonment of its pleasures and sins, were marks of the highest morality. To attain to them human society itself might have to be discarded on account of its contaminating influences. The monk (the one who lives alone) became the typical Christian. Hence the clergy, as holy men, were obliged to adopt the monastic ideal. The regular clergy laid down the law for the secular clergy. But the secular clergy met a double temptation, for while they had to contend with the inner impulse that wars against the soul, they had the additional inducements to evil that come from without. Hence the sternness of the discipline to which they were subjected. A large part of the history of the internal affairs of the mediaeval church is

the story of the effort to carry this policy into effect despite the pleadings or recalcitrancy of human nature in the priests. They were compelled formally to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil. In the course of the long and bitter struggle that the imposition of this injunction involved, the emphasis naturally fell upon the negative side, and from the eyes of busy men whose hands were full of ecclesiastical politics the vision of the heavenly world almost disappeared.

Renunciation, therefore, is the pre-eminent Catholic virtue. It has three principal forms, according as the natural world, human flesh, or the lordship of Satan may be in mind—poverty, chastity, and obedience. This trinity of virtues is one and inseparable. They are all incumbent on both sexes—for alongside the monk had long since appeared the nun, a competitor with him for the heavenly reward. They are incumbent on all, but not in equal degree, for there are some frail members of humanity who can adopt the ideal only in part. Those who come short of the full requirement shall have a lower place at the time of the heavenly reward.

The vow of poverty is a judgment passed on the striving for earthly wealth and power and the clamor for worldly honor. Personal possessions are renounced and, like the birds of the sky, man's dependence is placed on the gifts of providence and human charity. The monk, with his shoeless feet and his begging-bowl, is the emblem of this virtue. Poverty of dress and dwelling reveals his poverty of spirit. His is the Kingdom of Heaven. The mediaeval church had the good sense to perceive that this could not be demanded of all and met the weak half-way by accepting a partial renunciation of goods in the

form of gifts to the church, or a limited asceticism in the observance of fasts and holy seasons, or a performance of penances for errors and misdeeds, or some worthy deed in support of the church's enterprises. Those things would put them in partial possession of the monk's virtues. At times a great wave of popular feeling carried multitudes toward a fuller compliance with these demands. The mediaeval crusades, on their better side, were a magnificent tribute to the power which the idea of the value of renunciation of earthly good exercised on the minds of multitudes in a hard and brutal age. It was a time of unparalleled renunciation of external goods for the sake of an ideal—though, alas! the ideal was a perversion of the true.

The vow of chastity is a judgment of condemnation passed upon the natural appetites and passions. It was supported by the Augustinian theory that original sin is propagated through concupiscence, which is thereby made out to be the root of all sinning. This vow brought the ascetic into conflict with his inner nature. The battle had to be fought alone. The fight against nature was a bitter one, indeed, and was often fought under the depressing weight of a soiled conscience. The very struggle against the passions seemed to intensify them, for passion is strongest when the thoughts are turned toward it. Moreover, the struggle against the proclivities of the flesh brought men into conflict with the habits and feelings that gather around the life of the home and find their nourishment within the family circle. But the renunciation of the delights and the loves of the home was made into a virtue. The home life was put on a lower level than the life of the celibate, and marriage

itself was put under the ban to the extent that it was regarded as a sinful relation apart from the sacrament which removed the evil of it. Even so, the married man and woman were made inferior to the celibates. Marriage was rather tolerated than honored. The highest sanctity could be found only in the state of celibacy. The long struggle of the papacy to enforce the law of celibacy on the clergy is well known to historians and need not detain us here. The excruciating agonies of many celibates—their fastings, their flagellations, their torments of their bodies by the wearing of such garments as hair shirts, perhaps with iron barbs pointing inward, and other artificial methods of diverting the thoughts from evil imaginations—are familiar; and so also is their failure.

The human heart must have its recompenses. It found them in those days and does so still. Priests, deprived of the solace of natural affection, found in the Virgin Mary a substitute for a human bride. Nuns, robbed of the opportunity to lavish their affections on a real human lover or children of their own, pictured themselves as the brides of the Lord Jesus and in ministry to destitute children found an outflow of tenderness. Even so, the natural craving for mutual love remained unsatisfied and often broke through its bonds, as the story of Abelard and Heloise so forcibly reminds us. Moreover, it must be said that the charms of motherhood triumphed over the hectic glow of virginity, for the graces of Mary that attract the admiration and longing of the masses of Catholics do not turn out, when analyzed, to be the virtues of celibacy but the graces of motherhood. Mary stands for pure motherhood after all, and not for a desolate virginity.

The vow of obedience is of even higher rank than the vows of poverty and chastity, for as soon as Christianity is identified with an ecclesiastical order obedience embraces them both. It stands for the renunciation of both intellect and will. It involves assent to the church's teachings, compliance with her ritual, and conformity with her rules of life. It is the prostration of the whole personality before its superior. Its fulfilment would, presumably, remove all disorder and rebellion and make all revolution impossible. It canonizes the principle of order.

3. CATHOLICISM AS AN INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM OR A CHURCH

The early days of Christianity were characterized by the spontaneity and sense of inspiration which accompany all great religious revivals. The hazards which invariably associate themselves with freedom were rapidly multiplied as the new faith spread. The sense of inner unity which was sufficient to secure a fair degree of coherency among all Christians at first soon became an inadequate protection against the tendencies to spiritual disintegration and confusion. Some kind of government was needed in order that some kind of order might be preserved. This need was intensified by the sufferings of Christians at the hands of the populace and the civil authorities. Leaders competent for the task appeared and in time welded together the majority of the members of the religious communion into a compact organization which succeeded in drawing to itself the loyalty of the Christian multitudes and in withstanding the grinding persecutions to which from time

to time believers were subjected. It won the respect of the Roman authorities, and finally the farseeing Emperor Constantine succeeded in virtually incorporating it with the other instruments of the imperial government.

The churches had now become the church—if we do not count the numerous heretics that remained outside the new corporation and maintained for a long time a vigorous polemic against it. It embodied the Roman imperial spirit and naturally took on more and more the forms of the Roman administration, though with different names. When the church divided into an Eastern and a Western church, with territorial boundaries following pretty closely the lines of division between the Eastern and Western empires, the government of the two churches became differentiated according to the types of political authority prevailing in the East and the West respectively. The Eastern church became an ecclesiastical hierarchy after the aristocratical pattern, with its heads in the many metropolitan cities. The Western church, with only one great metropolitan center, carried the tendency to centralization of authority farther and became an ecclesiastical hierarchy after the monarchical pattern. There were many fathers, or popes, in the East, but only one Father, or Pope, ultimately in the West. To us Western people he is known simply as the Pope.

The course of events through which this development was brought about or the study of the actual position of the Roman Pope today need not occupy our time now. The fact of the evolution and its dependence on the exigencies which arose with time are the significant things which first attract attention, but it is important to remember that to the thorough Catholic neither of these is of special account or, perhaps, even true. For him the

church as an organization is essential to Christianity—indeed the church and the Kingdom of God, or Christianity, are identical. The whole order is of divine institution. The works of (pseudo) Dionysius the Areopagite, with their supposed revelation of the heavenly hierarchy upon which the earthly hierarchy was presumably modeled, succeeded in impressing on the minds of the credulous the belief that the church as an institution, in the form in which it now exists, is the divine institute of salvation. Outside of it there is no Christianity. It is an axiom of Catholicism, "Without the church is no salvation."

Christianity is, therefore, in the end a matter of government. Everything else in it must be interpreted from that point of view. The monastic vow of obedience is characteristic of the entire system. The whole complex of ascetical practices gets its value thence. The penitential system of the church is a method of administration. The ritual is observed as an "office" and its features have official validity when observed with a view to doing what the church does. That is, official authority alone can give validity to any act of worship or service. The very virtues and graces which appear in the lives of men are real only when they issue from the church's administrative acts in sacraments. The doctrines of the church are all essential to salvation because assent to them is the condition of participation in the church. They are viewed by the Catholics, not as utterances of truth in itself and for its own sake, but as authoritative enactments to which the sacrifice of our intellect must be made. In short, the church is an institution, divinely ordered in all its forms, to which is committed the charge to bring men into the Kingdom of God

by her sacraments, so that her sovereignty over the souls of men is exercised over the whole of their natural life and continues in the case of her members even into the world beyond, terminating only at the Judgment Day.

The great "notes" of the true church—unity, universality, apostolicity, holiness—find their true interpretation here. Unity: the church is one, not because of a spiritual experience common to all the members, but because she has one sole authority, speaks with one voice, and conforms all to one end. Her unity is really uniformity, formal rather than vital. Universality (catholicity): the church embraces all the saved, not in the inclusive sense which we might give to the words by saying that wherever there is a saved man there is the church, but in the exclusive sense that none is saved except those within the church. Apostolicity: the church is formally constituted by divine legislation, in that Jesus Christ, true God, committed his power and right of government to his apostles and they have transmitted it to their successors in the apostolic office without defilement and without break in continuity to the present, and forever. Her rule is unquestionable and absolute. Holiness: the church stands apart from, and on a different level from, all other institutions, in that all saving grace is deposited in her as an institution. This is not to be understood as meaning that all her members are actually morally pure, for many are notoriously impure. It means that in her sacraments and all her official acts there is a mysterious, heavenly quality which effects the redemption of all who receive them. Her pope and all her priesthood are holy, not in the sense that they are truly good men, but as officials. A man might be a bad

man and be a good priest or a good pope. The efficacy of the office in no sense depends on the character of the man who officiates in it. Salvation is wholly a matter of church.

4. CATHOLICISM AS A PHILOSOPHY OR BODY OF DOCTRINES

Catholicism is not so much a philosophy as it is an order of life. Its interest in philosophy is secondary. For the spirit that governs philosophy is the love of truth, and its characteristic activity is inquiry, investigation, speculation. By contrast, Catholicism is fearsome in regard to inquiry and seeks to regulate it in the interest of an established order. Its characteristic attitude of mind is receptiveness, and of will, submission.

Yet it has a use for philosophy and has never hesitated to avail itself of the help philosophy can give. It resorts to philosophy as a means of vindication rather than as a weapon of attack. Its philosophy is apologetical in aim, conservative in temper, and suspicious of every new movement of thought. Its theology, in consequence, is opportunist in principle and refrains from setting forth an entire system of doctrines (dogmas). While it professes to have come into possession of a complete body of dogmas by tradition, these are held partly in reserve, and particular dogmas are announced only as occasion calls for them. If one examines the Catholic creeds, canons, and decrees, beginning with the Apostles' Creed and ending with the encyclical *Pascendi Gregis*, he will find that they seek not so much to furnish the people with positive doctrines as to warn them against current heresy. The declarations of councils and popes on these matters commonly conclude with anathemas.

While the attitude of Catholicism toward contemporary philosophy has varied from age to age, we may say that the relations of early Catholicism with secular philosophy were much more intimate than those of later Catholicism, when Catholic Christianity had become strictly institutional. Early Catholic thought absorbed the mystical and metaphysical spirit of the times, while later Catholic thought turned to the practical necessities of church government. The former sought to vindicate the idea of salvation by mysteries (sacraments) and issued in a theory of the universe. The latter sought to vindicate the idea of salvation through the mediating action of the church and issued in a theory of the government of the world. The two are mingled in Catholic orthodoxy.

The Catholic theory of the universe is, in brief, that there are two worlds, disparate, separate, and distinct. They may be variously named—the natural and the supernatural, the physical and the spiritual, the earthly and the heavenly, the secular and the holy, the temporal and the eternal, the human and the divine—according to the point of view from which they are considered. In the lower of these two worlds darkness, error, sin, and death are found; in the higher, light, truth, purity, and immortality. Man belongs to the lower, but has longings for the higher and by redemption may attain to it. He is unable of himself to rise to it. For while his faculties fit him to know the lower world and even to infer from it the existence of the Supreme Being in the higher world to whom this lower world owes its existence, he is unable to know the character of that higher world by the exercise of natural powers and, for this, he is dependent on a supernatural communication.

At this point the theory of the world becomes a theory of revelation and redemption. There come from time to time, in ways altogether beyond our finite comprehension, supernatural communications, miraculously attested, from this higher world, and with them also supernatural bestowments of ineffable power. The instruments of these communications are holy, inspired men, and particularly selected portions or articles of the natural world containing in themselves the mysterious potencies which purify and immortalize our souls. He who subjects himself to these holy instruments will be saved.

When these mysterious powers became concentrated in the hands of a hierarchy possessing the sole right to administer them, this early metaphysic became intertwined with a philosophy of human history. This is virtually given above in the theory of Catholicism as church. It is a theory of government, divine and human. The government of the heavenly world is immediately by God and his angels, but the government of the earthly world is mediate and is ministered through divinely ordained and consecrated agencies. These instruments of the heavenly government are given authority over all natural forms of government and carry out through them indirectly the will of heaven, while in the distinctively supernatural activities on earth the church alone has a right to rule. A system of rewards for merit and of punishment for sins, valid for this world and the heavenly world as well, thereby comes to light and is put into execution. This has now come to be the Catholic interpretation of Christianity.

CHAPTER III

MYSTICISM

The transition from Catholicism to mysticism seems at first so sharp that it is almost as if one had entered into a different world. Catholicism stands out against the sky-line of life in such massive form that it commands the attention and anxious regard even of those who are without serious interest in religion. It seeks to lay its hand on the helm of human life and to direct all affairs down to the smallest details, in order that humanity may reach the eternal harbor. It glories in the outward marks of greatness and symbols of authority—vast buildings, powerful organizations of men, priests robed in splendor, pompous processions, mysterious pantomimes, and gorgeous liturgies—all calculated to impress and subdue even the most rebellious. It shrinks not from calling upon armies and navies to do battle for its cause and to destroy its foes. It has gone so far as to seek to divide the territories of the earth among its faithful servants.

Mysticism, on the contrary, loves retirement. It seeks to dwell within the secret recesses of the soul. It cherishes secluded and lonely places where it may give itself to meditation and aspiration undisturbed. It stigmatizes worldly ambition and worldly power as vain, and cherishes instead the inner contemplation and vision of the heavenly. It scorns material and fleshly things while it revels in the unseen and worships in the spirit.

Catholicism and mysticism seem to be in direct antithesis. On closer analysis, however, it may turn out that there comes into view such a close affinity between them that we are unable any longer to regard mysticism merely as a reaction against Catholicism, but to see in it one of the chiefest supports of that great system. At any rate, many famous mystics have found their home in the Catholic church.

The word "mystic" is connected with the Greek word which is transliterated "mystery" in English and, like it, is derived from a root meaning "to close or shut." A mystery is something hidden or secret. Among the Greeks there were secret religious orders whose members were initiated by submitting to ceremonies unknown to outsiders and by which they were supposed to become the recipients of a species of higher enlightenment and thus to enter into oneness of life with the divinity in whose name these ceremonies were observed. The door to this higher light was closed to the uninitiated. In the course of time the term *mysticism* has become detached from any necessary connection with the observance of secret ceremonies. Anyone may now be called a mystic who claims to have received into the secrecy of his spirit a higher knowledge than can be imparted by the ordinary methods of intelligence. The term mysticism may be used as descriptive of this attitude of mind, or, more properly, of the theory that supports it.

One might ask, Does mysticism as a state of mind spring from the ancient Mysteries? It may be that the theory of insight which bears the name of mysticism among Christians is one of the consequences of introducing the practices of the Mysteries into early Christian

communities; but these Mysteries themselves are rooted deeply in that sense of awe and ignorance that comes over men everywhere, in crude civilizations and in the most refined, when they face the baffling problem of the meaning of the world. The Inexplicable stares at man on every hand, and the deep depression which he feels in the face of it begets a reaction in his soul. He struggles to gain by one grand leap into the unknown the possession of those eternities which he seeks in vain by the slow and laborious processes of piecemeal study.

Does mysticism, then, stand for a religious view of things? Not in the narrow sense of religion as faith in a higher person. But in that looser sense of religion which denotes the soul's commitment to the highest meaning of all reality it is descriptive of a type of religion. Indeed, the thoroughgoing mystic would hold that mysticism is the essence of all religion and contains the hidden truth in all religions. All else is incidental or secondary for him. Christian mysticism claims to be the true and final interpretation of Christianity.

The true mystic devotes himself supremely to the cultivation of what he calls the inner life. Now, inasmuch as every kind of religion is rooted ultimately in some quality of the human spirit, mysticism is very intimately related to religion universally and may be affiliated with any and every kind. Mystics everywhere have an inner likeness to one another, but they are likely to differ as the religions with which they are connected differ from one another. The Christian mystic and the Mohammedan mystic will be mutually sympathetic, but each of them will bear some of the special characteristics of his religious connections. Similarly with regard to

the mystics of other faiths. Mysticism may suffer modification according to the kind of positive religion with which it may be associated, but it seeks to find the ultimate in all religions. It tries to penetrate to that which underlies all the different religions and also to transcend them and melt their many colors in the pure, white light of perfect truth. Their worship, their social customs, their organizations, their creeds, are only symbols of that which is higher than they, only temporary resting-places for the human spirit as it rises to the height of that supreme experience when it is one with the ultimate reality—whatever these words may mean. If, then, mysticism is religion, it is also more than religion, in the common sense of that term. It is that out of which religion rises and that in which religion culminates. So, at least, its advocates in substance affirm.

This is not the same as to reduce all religions to the one level. All religions have their symbols by which they seek to express the ultimate truth to which they strive to attain, but some of them reach up vastly higher than others and minister more effectually to the soul's progress. Mysticism does not reject the supremacy of Christianity among religions unless it find some other faith that brings the soul nearer to its goal. Mysticism may profess to be the true interpretation of Christianity and *therewith* the final interpretation of all religions.

It is possible to distinguish different types of mysticism according as they accentuate this or that function of the human spirit. Their interpretations of Christianity will differ correspondingly. There is what we may call an aesthetic mysticism, which exalts the worth of the feeling experience. As the material world around us

communicates itself to us through our physical senses, so also through the higher sensibility the world of higher being registers itself upon our receptive spirituality and emancipates us from bondage to the things of physical sense. As the painter looking upon a scene in nature finds that it reflects itself upon his soul in a manner unknown to the mere physicist or biologist, and as he tries to reveal his secret to his fellows by the magic strokes of his brush; as the musician catches rhythms and detects harmonies in the universe which remain unrecorded by the finest and most sensitive instruments known to science because they belong to a different order of sensation, so the spirit of the mystic as it lies open to the impress of the spiritual world feels floating into itself that Reality of all existence which eye hath not seen and ear hath not heard but which the Infinite Spirit conveys to our higher sensibility. In this "absolute sensation," as it has been called, that whole of reality of which only fragments are disclosed to the artist and the musician comes to us in an instant. Then are we at rest. Then are we satisfied. Such a mysticism, if professedly Christian, would interpret Christianity as the religion of pure, simple, unalloyed, perfect feeling, the religion of perfect peace.

There is a speculative mysticism, a mysticism based on the primacy of thought. "I think," said the great Descartes, "therefore I am." Thought possessed, for him, the solution of the riddle of the universe. The great speculative and psychological movements of the last three centuries are a modern tribute to the greatness of thought. Socrates and Plato and Aristotle virtually said the same of old when they sought to disclose its

mysterious powers to their hearers. Logicians have sought to unfold the immanent order in it. Idealist philosophers have sought to construct a universe for our human intelligence under its sole imperial authority. "My God, I think thy thoughts after thee," said a votary of thought. There is an Absolute Thought which is the truth of all our individual thinking and the guaranty of its trustworthiness, say many. Who has not felt a mighty inspiration as he discovers that he can enter into this thought-universe and make it his own? Yet the processes of our actual thinking are often slow and faltering. Our best reasoning is precarious at times. The axioms of an earlier generation may be a source of skepticism in a later. Science proceeds by means of regular processes, but she splits up the world of our thinking into sections and places an interrogation point after everything. Nothing is settled hereby. Even idealistic philosophy proceeds to the discovery of its Absolute by the slow and involved method of construing it through its self-revelation in the relative and manifold. But mysticism professes to know the Absolute from within and by immediate communion with the Totality of all things.

There is also an ethical mysticism, a mysticism that professes identity with the Absolute Will. The theory reposes on the consciousness of moral compulsion which is felt so mightily by some people. In all ages and among all peoples there have been persons who took a path in life all their own, defying, perchance, hoary traditions and sacred customs and even setting their own will against the weight of the world, because they felt they could do no other. These people say that a voice

within, like the daemon of Socrates, speaks to them in great crises of their lives, saying, "This is the way; walk thou in it." They are found in the greatest numbers at turning-points of human history and they prove to be rallying-centers for men of less firm conviction; or they bring terror to their friends and wrath upon themselves by a stubborn adherence to a sense of duty that often seems unreasonable to others and of which they can give no reasoned account to themselves. They have heard the Voice and that is enough for them. When such an attitude of mind is treated as a philosophic principle grounding an ethical interpretation of the world, we have ethical mysticism. Kant's great doctrine of the Categorical Imperative, the absolute dictum of the self-legislative practical reason, the moral law which demands its own fulfilment and refuses to be identified with any particular or empirical act, is an instance of this ethical mysticism.

Summing up the results of our study thus far we can say: There is a tendency to mysticism in all men, but the strength of it varies in different peoples and different individuals. Men commonly experience uprisings of feeling that carry them on irresistibly toward some end which they would never have deliberately chosen; or they have intuitions of unseen things, visions of higher worlds, anticipations of coming events, which hold their minds enchained and with which they would not part, though there may seem no way of proving the truth of these foregleams; or they experience the constraining power of some greater personality or higher will, and the bondage to it is dearer to them than liberty itself. When the attempt is made to unfold a philosophy on such a

basis we have genuine mysticism. Mysticism, then, is a philosophy. It is a philosophy that aspires to be a religion by securing for men the high results that religion seeks. If, in the narrower view of it, we may call it a philosophy of religion, it is a philosophy of religion that takes the mystical element in religion and attempts to treat that as the essence of all religions.

As a philosophy mysticism has a threefold aspect: first, it is a theory of knowledge; secondly, it is a theory of existence; thirdly, it is a theory of life. In each of these it has a positive and a negative side. (1) As a theory of knowledge, negatively, it points out the limitations of the methods of logic and of science. Neither an analysis of the processes of thought nor a synthesis of particulars can lead us beyond the partial and incomplete. The All, the Totality, the Infinite, lie beyond and cannot be approached by the dissection of present knowledge or by adding portion to portion. Agnosticism and despair can be avoided only by renouncing the pride of intellect and laying one's soul open to the Infinite. Then, positively, we know the All because it has become our very self. (2) As a theory of existence it denies the reality of things perceived by sense, because these are only transient. Only that which forever is, truly is. The particular objects we know are only the notes in an eternal harmony. The separate notes are nothing in themselves, and as long as we think of them we never catch the tune. The notes are lost in the tune. That alone remains. (3) As a theory of life, mysticism seeks to raise men above legalism and tradition with their attention to specific acts, by which no man can be saved, and to lead them to the absolute surrender which puts one in

possession of the power of the Infinite Will. Then only have we attained. Then only are we saved from the love of the changing and temporary. Then only are we delivered from the passions and aims that feed on the things which pass away.

Without pursuing the general study of mysticism farther we may now point out more specifically the interpretation it puts upon Christianity. We shall begin the examination of Christian mysticism by indicating the degree of prominence it obtains in the whole Christian movement and then proceed to indicate its outstanding characteristics, its method, and, finally, its strength and its weakness as a spiritual movement.

I. THE APPEARING OF MYSTICISM IN HISTORICAL CHRISTIANITY

Mysticism as a philosophy of the Christian religion finds ample footing in the faith of the early communities of believers. The earliest believers, being mostly Jews or proselytes, naturally carried with them into the new faith the deep regard for dreams, trances, visions, and apparitions which remained over in Judaism after divination, soothsaying, and witchcraft had been put under the ban. Through these abnormal experiences messages came to them, sometimes from the mouths of angel visitants and sometimes directly from their God, conveying an intelligence of things in a higher realm than could be reached by the common mind of men. There were ecstatic experiences when the subject was carried into the heavenly world and heard and saw unspeakable things. The Jewish prophetic inspiration—the sense of being the instrument of the Spirit of the Lord, the consciousness

of an inward burden of the Lord and of the possession of a foresight of things to come—was cherished and intensified in Christians. The range of this gift was greatly widened so as to be enjoyed by multitudes of common believers if not by all of them. These things and the extraordinary powers that accompanied them were looked upon as marks of the special favor of God. Mystical utterances of a profound order occur not infrequently in the Hebrew and Jewish Scriptures, especially in the later pre-Christian days: "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." "Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from me." "My soul waiteth in silence for God only." "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit and whither shall I flee from thy presence?" "When I awake, I am still with thee." These sayings relate to spiritual states that do not seem capable of being placed under the action of the logical intelligence.

The New Testament abounds in mystical utterances. The Synoptic Gospels ascribe some of them to Jesus: "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." "Blessed art thou . . . . for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." "No one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son and he to whom the Son willeth to reveal him." Jesus himself is said to have assured his disciples that he would be a mystical presence with them: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." The tendency to emphasize these experiences grew with the

accession of converts from the Graeco-Roman peoples, who brought with them into the Christian communion a vague yearning and reverence for the secret and ineffable in life, and they naturally viewed the Christian message and the accompanying rites as bringing these to men in a fuller sense than had ever been known before. Paul has much to say to his Greek readers on the theme of the higher knowledge obtained through the Spirit of Christ, which was to him the same as the Spirit of God. One or two quotations here must suffice: "We speak a wisdom not of this world, God's wisdom in a mystery, even the wisdom that hath been hidden. Things which eye saw not and ear heard not, God hath revealed unto us through the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." This inward illumination of Paul's became the very presence of the Son of God within him: "It pleased God to reveal his Son in me. . . . . I conferred not with flesh and blood." The experience was one that transformed his very being. "We all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." These experiences were to him revelations of abiding realities in contrast with the passing things of this world: "We look not at the things that are seen but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal."

The mystical tendency is greatly accentuated in the Johannine writings and in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The heavenly and the earthly stand apart; the latter at best is only a symbol of the former. Similarly also as respects flesh and spirit, God and man or the world:

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." "Men loved the darkness rather than the light." "He that is of the earth is of the earth and of the earth he speaketh: he that cometh from heaven is above all." "Ye are of this world; I am not of this world." The things of the earth are only "copies of the things in the heavens" at best, and not the heavenly things themselves. The former are the "things that are shaken" and will be removed, while the latter cannot be shaken, but remain forever. Correspondingly, there is a higher enlightenment, even an enlightenment that makes men one with God: By faith men "endure as seeing him who is invisible." They come to the heavenly city and to God himself. "Ye have an unction from the Holy One and ye know all things. . . . . Ye need not that any one teach you." "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us." Here is the life of supreme love. "He that loveth is begotten of God and knoweth God." The new birth, the new knowledge, the love of God, are all one. In this believers are made one with God and Christ: "If a man love me he will keep my word; and my father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." There is a penetration of their being with Christ and God. "I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one." Here appears, at least on first glance, the realization of the mystical longing. Passages of such import as the foregoing might be indefinitely multiplied. Mysticism sees in them the utterance of the very essence of the Christian religion.

While the mystical expressions of the New Testament retain the strong moral coloring of the Jewish faith, the ethical spirit is much less manifest in the mysticism of

the ancient Catholic church and at times seems to fall entirely away. When the Christian communion became gentile and began to naturalize itself in the world, the sluices by which the mingling types of spiritual life in the Graeco-Roman world flowed into it were thrown wide open, with the result that the mystical tendencies in early Christianity asserted themselves with increasing strength and took on more and more the character of the non-ethical spiritual yearnings of the age. Then, too, the more the church found itself in organized opposition to the secular power of Rome the more deeply her communicants felt that their ideal must be the purely spiritual and the more it needed a mystical interpretation of the universe as a support. Several types of mysticism became prominent.

In Montanism the heated and florid Phrygian imagination was fired by the idea that in the bestowal of the Paraclete by Christ the summit of spiritual possibility lay open to all those who would obey the law of its impartation. By ecstatic experience, furthered by the ascetic life, the human spirit could become identical with the Holy Spirit and able to utter truth that transcended the teachings of the Christian tradition as much as these transcended the Jewish law. These utterances could be subjected to no outer test, but carried their authority in themselves. Absolute prophetic inspiration was obtained.

In the movement known as Gnosticism, that threatened to make the Christian gospel a revealed philosophy and the Christian church a pagan mystery-society, there was an effort to unite the faith in the divine saviorhood of Christ with a speculative cosmology and systems of

secret initiations that introduced men to the ultimate knowledge that would redeem them from the delusions of materiality and the sins that issued from error, and would impart to them the bliss of becoming an organ of divinity. On account of the immoral pagan practices associated with it and on account of its nullification of the real character of many Christian traditions, it was rejected by the church, but its power was not overthrown. In the revived Platonism represented by such great thinkers as Plotinus and Porphyry the inner spirit of Gnosticism was restored and became the very nerve of the Christian dogma. In the neo-Platonic system there was a theory of the origin of the material world through a descending series of emanations from the One (God) that is above all existence, and a theory of the re-ascent of the human soul to that supreme region from which it originated, till it is again one with God, "the alone with the Alone." This is made out to be the Christian redemption. This is the theory that, in its essence, underlies the dogma of the two natures of Christ and the Trinity. Hence we may say that in the ancient creeds and the ritual that was inseparable from them mysticism received its christening and became established in the right of Christian citizenship.

The great Augustine in his speculations and meditations took up the parable of mysticism. By interweaving it into his own profound spiritual experiences, the activities of the Catholic church, the Christian Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and the great conception of history as unfolding the fulfilment of a universal divine government, he secured for mysticism a dominating influence in the church of the West. In the

mediaeval Western church the mystical tendency became prolific in producing great spiritual struggles and enterprises. It fostered the spirit of protest against the worldliness and corruption of the Roman church and stirred up rebellion against her authority. It awoke into speculative inquiry great theologians, like Hugo and Richard de St. Victor, Bonaventura, and Thomas Aquinas, and laid the foundation of modern Catholic orthodoxy. It created free religious associations of men in various countries for the cultivation of an independent piety. It helped to arouse the zeal of preachers like St. Bernard, ecclesiastics like Hildebrand, saints like Francis. It helped pave the way for the Protestant Reformation. The quietism of Madame Guyon and the warm piety of Catholic Modernists are evidences of its survival in Catholicism.

Mysticism has had a large place in Protestantism. The "inner word" of the Anabaptists, outranking and interpreting the written or outer word, the all-sufficient "faith" of Luther, the "secret witness of the Spirit" of Calvin and his followers, the "spiritual universe" of Boehme, the "inner light" that George Fox and the Quakers recognized in the soul of every man, the "soul liberty" of the Baptists, the "heart-religion" of the Pietists and Moravians, the "perfect love" of the Wesleyans, the "visions" of Swedenborg, and the zeal of the numerous present-day religious bodies professing a higher knowledge, all bear testimony to the continuance of the mystical temper in great force among Protestants. It is reflected in not a few of the hymns in popular use among the Protestant churches. The neo-Platonic character of two familiar

modern hymns may be exhibited by quoting a stanza from each:

Eternal Light! eternal Light!
How pure the soul must be,
When, placed within thy searching sight,
It shrinks not, but with calm delight
Can live and look on thee!

And

Breathe on me, breath of God!
Until my heart is pure,
Until with thee I will one will
To do or to endure.

2. OUTSTANDING CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM

a) The spirit of Christian mysticism is both critical and speculative. It is critical because it aims at simplicity and directness in religion. Feeling that in the Christian faith religion comes to perfection, it finds that perfection in the immediacy of the soul's relation to God. The Christian soul finds itself in God and God in itself. God is nearer than all else to the soul, the life of its life, and hence there can be no need of mediation between the soul and God. Whatever may come between them brings darkness and not light. All that lies beyond this inward union is secondary, and if it tend to obscure or interfere with the soul's consciousness of its God it is of no account or worse than useless. Hence the indifference which thoroughgoing Christian mystics commonly feel toward the mere externals of religion. Hence the attempt to penetrate through the traditions, the customs, the ceremonies, the forms of organization, and all the other drapery of historical Christianity and to discover the eternal essence

that lies concealed behind it all. It seeks to realize here on earth the religious experience which men hope for in heaven. But in discovering the essence of Christianity it becomes necessarily speculative. For if it is in Jesus Christ that men find their final salvation, then it is in him that this immediacy with God is found. It then becomes impossible to escape the task of relating this experience Christward with the experience Godward in such a way that the two become one. This calls for the profoundest religious speculation and creates the very dogmas whose interpolation into the relation between the soul and God obscures the immediacy of the divine enlightenment. Yet against these very dogmas mysticism voices a protest.

b) The spirit of Christian mysticism is both individualistic and universalistic. The mystic is interested in the movements of his own soul. The ancient Christian mystics were the fathers of the modern psychology of religion. They it was who taught us to analyze and estimate the worth of our inner experiences of conflict, defeat, and victory and to perceive in those battlefields hidden from the view of the mere outsider the greatest tragedies and triumphs in the story of all the worlds. It was they who discovered in the inner recesses of man's soul the highest working of those mighty forces that constitute the universe. Is it any wonder that a Bernard of Clairvaux should traverse the passes of the Alps surrounded by scenes of the most marvelous beauty and grandeur without uttering a single word that would indicate that these things made any lasting impression on his mind? For his eye was turned inward to contemplate

those vaster scenes, of which the grandest natural scenery could be only a sensuous reflection, in which he stood nearer to the ultimate Sublime and Beautiful in the presence of which all the things of sense shrank away abashed.

In the life of the soul the Christian mystic sees the final word of the Christian revelation. Without it the Christian Scriptures would be only childish prattle. In the living soul he has found the pearl of great price. The gospel stories of the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Son are parables of the wanderings of the soul from its true self and its coming to itself again. The mystic's Christ is not a historic human individual, but the Indwelling One. For him the essence of the distinctive Christian revelation is found to be, "Christ in me." For him the essence of the Christian redemption is expressed in the words, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." For him the essence of all Christian activity is expressed in the consciousness, "Not I, but the grace of Christ which was with me." In other words, he is persuaded that in examining his own spirit-life he is using a plumb line that reaches down to the depths of Christ, of God.

Here we are reminded that the ultimate secret of the mystic's interest in the individual soul lies in his hope of finding there a Something More than himself, the Soul of all souls, in which or in whom all souls are first lost to themselves and afterward find themselves again. What better lot, he asks, can fall to a man than that he should lose his own narrow, empirical self in the Infinite Self? Thus it is true that he who loses his soul in this world

shall keep it to life eternal. Why should anyone wish to preserve to himself a self-existence which is after all only a selfish existence? The worth of the individual lies, not in the fact that he is an individual, but in the truth that when he truly finds himself the Universal is all the Self he desires.

c) Christian mysticism seeks the attainment of pure spirituality, but is inseparably united with materiality. In common with all other mystics, the Christian mystic is powerfully conscious of the opposition between the spirit and the flesh in man and between spirituality and materiality in the universe that reflects the soul of man. He seeks the transformation of his whole being into spiritual existence and the transmutation of the whole of existence into a spiritual world. The Christian mystic's heaven is a condition of existence that may be defined as "the spirits of just men made perfect." It will be a condition of pure spiritual love. If he loves others, if he loves himself, it is for the sake of the love of God, that is, for a purely spiritual love, a love which is unconnected with physical relations. The holy city for which he looks is a heavenly city, which is lighted and filled with God. He sings of that city alone and is interested in no other. He pines for that city and is willing to forego all earthly joys and comforts for its dear sake. How vain and worthless are all earthly cities and their wealth! Bernard's great hymn, "Hora Novissima," done into English by J. M. Neale under the title, "The Celestial Country," is a sustained, unwearied (however wearying to modern people) recital of the glories of that spiritual state in contrast with the deep pessimism it exhibits in regard to this world. The verse most

familiar to Protestants may be inserted here to represent the mystical contemplation of heaven:

> Jerusalem the golden,
> With milk and honey blest,
> Beneath thy contemplation
> Sink heart and voice oppressed;
> I know not, O, I know not,
> What social joys are there;
> What radiancy of glory!
> What light beyond compare!

As we follow the course of the poet's contemplation we are impressed with his failure to shake off the pressure of materiality. For almost the whole of his imagery is drawn from scenes of natural, physical life and material prosperity. It is the same with those women mystics of the Middle Ages who believed that they had cast off all other love for the sake of the love of Christ, the Bridegroom of their souls. The saints whom they picture to themselves in glory are bedecked in the very millinery whose earthly counterpart they had presumably driven from their hearts. The simple truth of the matter is that Christian mysticism has never succeeded in shaking off the wholesome Christian appreciation of the worth of material reality. If mysticism only recognizes spiritual good, it is, nevertheless, unable to represent it except in terms of material good.

3. THE METHOD OF CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM

It would seem at first that it must be quite out of place to speak of a method of mysticism. For the mystical experience, being ineffable, cannot be brought under a consistent mode of expression; since it bears its authority within itself it cannot be made to rest upon a law of

action or occurrence; since it wells up from the secret depths of the subliminal self or comes down from a higher self no attempt to secure it by human efforts can hope for steady success. As soon as it is brought under an order of things it loses its distinctive excellence. Nevertheless, mystics have been insistent that the experience is obtainable and have sought carefully to offer guidance to the seeking soul. This is inevitable as soon as it is admitted that the experience is desirable and satisfying. There is a method in mysticism. The method of Christian mysticism does not differ from the method of mysticism in general except in so far as the virtues cherished in Christianity take on a character of their own and in so far as the object of Christian adoration is distinctive.

First of all, the would-be participant in the mystical experience must submit to a discipline of the will. This is twofold, having a negative side and a positive side. On the negative side there must be a withdrawal of the will from aims that divert it from obtaining unity with the ultimate Reality; there must be a withdrawal of the attention of the intellect from the mere becoming of things in order to the attainment of the vision of God; there must be an alienation of the emotions from things that belong to the artificial world of common life. In other words, the true mystic must be an ascetic. As Peter Damiani said, "Whoever would reach the summit of perfection should keep within the cloister of his seclusion, cherish spiritual leisure, and shudder at traversing the world, as if he were about to plunge into a sea of blood. For the world is so filthy with vices that any holy mind is befouled even by thinking about it." This is the extreme Catholic view of the matter. The differ-

ence between the Catholic mystic and the Protestant mystic is, at this point, one of degree. Evelyn Underhill says: "As the purified sense, cleansed of prejudice and self-interest, can give us fleeting communications from the actual broken-up world of duration at our gates: so the purified and educated will can wholly withdraw the self's attention from its usual concentration on small useful aspects of the time-world, refuse to react to its perpetually incoming messages, retreat to the unity of its spirit, and there make itself ready for messages from another plane." This also is asceticism.

The positive side of the discipline is the more important. The Nay is only a passageway to the Yea. After the will, by withdrawal, renunciation, and mortification, has received its purgation, there begins its concentration upon the sole end of its exercise. "Tension, ardor, are of its essence; it demands the perpetual exercise of industry and courage." Beginning with meditation, the soul presses upward through successive stages of contemplation till at last it beholds with unblenched eye the Light Eternal. In this "naked contemplation" the poem of existence is read at last. The heart dwells in the eternal Love, selfhood is lost in the divine Quiet, and God is All in all. The strenuousness of the demands of mysticism is excelled by no type of religion or morality.

In Christian mysticism Jesus frequently becomes the center of the mystical striving. He is the soul's Bridegroom and the highest bliss is found in the ecstatic union with him. His cross, particularly, becomes the focal point of the contemplation of his glory until the worshiper becomes emotionally one with him, until "with him we will one will to do or to endure" and die to self in him.

Secondly, the discipline of the will is supported by a method of interpretation. It may be called symbolism. It has been shown that for mysticism the world of sense-perception is not the truly real world. Its value, however, is not merely negative. It has the value of the stamp on the gold coin. It tells of the Reality, or that which is beyond itself. It symbolizes the truth and only so far has it truth. The universe is a song, a psalm. The world of perception is the musical scale. It is not enough to know the notes. We most catch the music by the inner ear. The notation mediates it to us. The Maker of the world is an Artist. Science is worthful only as it leads to the cultivation of the Art divine.

A special application of this theory occurs in the mystical use of the Christian Scriptures. Allegorism is the true method of their interpretation. Behind the grammatical sense of the Scriptures lies the hidden sense. Consequently, questions of literary criticism or historical fact have a very subordinate interest, if any interest whatsoever. Often the mystical interpretation has been carried to the greatest extravagance. The Song of Solomon is one of the favorite hunting-grounds of allegorical interpreters. We are all familiar with the play of fancy in the use of apocalyptical works for purposes of "spiritual edification." Especially significant is the attitude assumed toward the historical Jesus—the outer events of his life, or his actual teachings, matter little. The heavenly Christ alone concerns the mystic. With this Christ he holds communion. This Christ reveals himself still to believers, and this Christ alone can save—he is God.

Thirdly, mystical piety is nourished by a method of emotional cultivation. The search for symbols mediating the longed-for experience issues in the selection or creation of them. Mysticism always develops a ritual. Mystics are the most at home in the ritualistic churches. For the attempt to sustain the high elevation of soul which is called union with God is bound to slacken and fall back unless means be taken to revive the sagging experience as frequently as may be. Otherwise indifference or despair must follow. Hence the ritual, hence the sacraments, hence the elaborate system of symbols which have gradually grown up in the Catholic church. Mysticism frequently eventuates in what seemed at first its opposite—Catholicism.

4. THE STRENGTH AND THE WEAKNESS OF MYSTICISM IN CHRISTIANITY

This can be discerned by recalling the circumstances under which the phenomena of mysticism have been most in evidence. Mysticism has been frequently the resort of the physically weak and oppressed. When governments have become despotic and have crushed weaker states to the ground or have deprived their subjects of their liberties; when worldly power has been put into the hands of the rich and the common people have been subjected to impoverishment and cruelty, then the hopelessness of their material condition has turned the minds of men to the better hope of a higher enrichment by participation in the realities of a spiritual world over which material forces have no control and for the possession of which a man is not dependent on the suffrages of his fellows. Here mysticism appears as an affirmation

of the reality and worth of the spiritual over against the vanity of the material, and, at the same time, as a vindication of the indefeasible prerogative of the individual human spirit. Thus it was when the power of ancient Rome threatened the liberties and life of the weaker peoples. The mysticism of ancient Catholicism is in part an answer to the claims of the Empire.

Mysticism has been not infrequently the support of dissenters against ecclesiastical despotism. In times of organized religious aggrandizement, when priestly authorities, with apparent success, have sought to usurp the control of spiritual functions; when a stately or attractive ritual has emerged as a means of satisfying spiritual wants; when, in consequence, formalism and pomp have been substituted for the gentle graces of true religion; and when the pride of sacerdotalism has been flanked by dependence, ignorance, and grossness in the masses, then mysticism has arisen as a mighty reaction. It has called men back to the simplicity of the truly spiritual life, its freedom from external control, its independence of material support, its supremacy over all outer authority, its immediacy of access to the individual man. Religion is affirmed to be an inward life and not a system of worship or an order of society. Thus it was when the mediaeval dissenters rose in revolt against the claims of the mighty mediaeval Catholic church.

Mysticism, again, has sprung up in protest against the pretensions of intellectual despotism in the life of religion. When the truth of religious faith has been subjected to intellectual analysis or theoretical speculation; when the possession of this faith has been identified with acquiescence in the truth of formal propositions or

dogmatical declarations; when an intellectual sacerdotalism, as aggressive and despotic as ecclesiastical or political dignitaries ever were, subjects the hearts of the common people to the authority of the professional thinker and the simple faith of the untrained smolders low, loses confidence and initiative; and when unbelief, fostered by undue regard for the power of logic, becomes proud and boastful, then mysticism has arisen to do battle on behalf of the spiritual privileges of the unintelligent and untrained, with the affirmation that the heart hath reasons that Reason knoweth not, that the religious life is irreducible to the terms of mere thought, and that the believer is greater than the thinker. Thus it was with the Anabaptists of the Reformation, with the Quakers of the later Reformation days, with the Pietists of Germany, and with the revivalism of Wesley and Whitefield.

The strength of mysticism lies in its originality, its simplicity, its power of defense, its conservation of fundamental realities. Its power of resistance against oppression is unconquerable. It protects the liberties of the weak. It vindicates the divinity of the human spirit and its supremacy over material being.

But it has exhibited the faults that accompany such virtues. Strong in defense, it has not had signal success as a progressive Christian propaganda. Deeply rooted in the self-consciousness of the individual, it has not shown a capacity for social construction or reconstruction. Mysticism cannot be identified with a continuous historical communion of faith. Its love of the unseen and ineffable has left little room for a bold quest of nature's secret by scientific methods, and it has manifested a

constant tendency to retire from the vast arenas of life where men do battle with the weapons of material nature or struggle to build up political structures for the maintenance of the acquisitions of human labor in the past. At times tremendously brave, on the whole it is timid in regard to public issues and is prone to leave these to the care of the "worldling." Finally, unable after all to subsist long on pure contemplation, or, with aristocratic spirit, despairing of the spirituality of the masses, it resorts too frequently to those very externals in worship that it has sought to discard. Mysticism is not Christianity, but only a factor in the making of it.

CHAPTER IV

PROTESTANTISM

In the year of grace 1529, at a meeting of the motley and cumbersome collection of secular and ecclesiastical potentates that constituted the Diet of the mediaeval German Empire, a minority of these rulers offered a joint protest to the emperor and the majority against a contemplated attack upon their rights. So far as concerned the deepest interests of men in general, the occasion was comparatively trivial, for it mattered little to the world then, as it does now, if some ecclesiast or princeling were to lose his special privileges. The mightiest influences in human affairs derive but little of their power from the will of officials or hereditary rulers. Notwithstanding, the occurrence was very significant inasmuch as the empire enjoyed a great traditional prestige even in those later days of its decadent power, and because this protest announced to all the peoples within the empire, and to all the other European nations that still professed a nominal connection with it, that a new political combination had arisen in support of a religious principle or profession. It was a sign of the times.

It may be that few of these men were deeply or intelligently in sympathy with religion for its own sake or cared very much for the liberties of the multitudes whose destinies were to be affected by their act. It may be that their act was prompted by selfish political considerations, but their protest was in support of a religious faith, and

it helped to force upon the attention of Europe the significance of the challenge which the brave monk, Martin Luther, had hurled into the face of the Roman papacy a few years before. It was the act of these protesters that gave to all who associated themselves thereafter with the opposition to Roman Catholicism the name they were to bear for all time to come—Protestants. As time passed, great companies of men rose up in many lands to join in further protests—no longer mainly against the claims of the heads of a great political system with its heritage of authority based upon its doings in the past, but against a greater and more dreaded system with its claims to a higher authority—the Roman Catholic church. The whole revolutionary movement that swept so swiftly over a large portion of Europe may be properly denoted by the term Protestantism. Our attention will be mostly confined to the religious side of it.

At the outset of this study it is to be granted that Protestantism cannot be understood apart from its relation to the Catholicism against which it projected itself. The name is not on that account, however, significant of a merely negative attitude. Catholic controversialists have continued to this day to reiterate this old charge against it. In those early days of Protestant history, when the bitter struggles in defense of the new profession naturally called forth a determined polemic against Catholicism, there was some plausibility in the accusation; but when the story of the rise and progress of Protestantism is told, when its powerful creations in many spheres of life are exhibited to the student, the absurdity of the view that Protestantism is simply a negation of Catholicism becomes evident. It is one of

the greatest positive constructive forces that have appeared in human life.

It is true that the outburst of this new power brought about for a time a degree of turmoil and confusion that was fairly appalling to lovers of peace and quiet. To such people it must have seemed at times that Protestantism was just destruction let loose. For accepted maxims of life were contradicted, society in many places was disintegrated, economic conditions were turned upside down, revolutions were started, wars broke out in many lands, blood was shed like water, thrones toppled, and the great church was rent in pieces. "Prophets" at times went hither and thither proclaiming that the end of the world was at hand, and attempts were actually made to set up a visible kingdom of Christ on the earth. The storm began to calm down after a while. From the time that Calvin's theocracy was firmly established at Geneva till the Westminster Confession of Faith and the treaty of Westphalia were signed Protestantism was progressively organizing itself in stable forms of political and ecclesiastical government in close affiliation with each other, and the Protestant nations displayed a solidity and vigor that gave them promise of the domination of the world. Their grip has slackened at times, but has never been let go. Protestantism has become an abiding force in the life of men.

It is not strange that the men who became leaders and spokesmen of the Reformation only half understood the real character of the powerful undercurrent of spiritual life that brought them to the surface. It was natural that the inner conservatism of many of these reasserted tself powerfully against the views of radicals. It was

natural that they should seek to keep the new spirit under restraint by bringing it under the authority of existing conditions, partly remodeled, and by binding it to the terms of doctrine established by law. Looking back from the distance of the present, we can recognize the influence of several conservative interests upon the new movement. First of all, there was the Catholic church itself with its succession of priests, its sacraments, its methods of government, and its insistence on unity. Secondly, there were the political states which had arisen in Europe as feudalism began to fail. These strong governments attracted to them the firm allegiance of their subjects, so much so that even the church had to take the second place in the affections of many. Thirdly, there was the reverence for the past and the hesitation to part with its treasures of custom and tradition. Fourthly, there was the instinct for order with which every new movement must reckon. The Protestant leaders found it practically necessary to adjust themselves to these conditions. The general outcome was a partial compromise. There was a checking of the religious insurrection on the one hand and an alteration of the terms and forms of the old faith in a modern direction on the other hand. Protestantism was not altogether a revolution. In the life of Christendom it was truly a reformation rather than a revolution.

But was the Protestantism that came to expression in the institutions that bear its name in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries truly and fundamentally religious? Was it not rather a watering down of religion, a pruning of the true Christianity in order to adjust it to the demands of the rational intelligence and of the secular

life and its institutions? I am firmly convinced that it was the former. The very fact that the men who have been designated by the popular mind as its greatest representatives were the religious teachers and reformers and the fact that the Protestant states that arose invariably issued a confession of faith uphold this view. The history of the creation of Protestantism and of the development of its life proves it. Protestantism is a type of religious faith. It was really in its beginnings a religious revival. That the religious leaders should be the men to speak the word that released upon the world the forces that had been held in leash by the Catholic church for a long time was natural, for it was through the awakened religious consciousness of the age that men became aware of the depth of the changes that had been working out in other spheres of life. It was the Christian messages of the leaders that made the retention of so many of the traditional beliefs and practices impossible. It was the Christian verities that men felt called upon to vindicate when they strove for the larger liberty that was coming to them. The Protestants believed themselves to be, in contrast with Catholics, the true Christians. Protestantism is a specific interpretation of Christianity.

1. HISTORICAL SOURCES OF PROTESTANTISM

Protestantism was fed by far-off fountains that sprang up in those mountain recesses of human life where lowly people, mostly unobserved by statesmen or high ecclesiastics, cultivated a simpler and purer faith than that which held the high places of the earth. It is now pretty certain that a non-churchly and non-sacramental type of Christian faith lived on through the Dark Ages before

mediaeval Europe was born. Albert H. Newman says: "That there were hosts of true believers during the darkest ages of Christian history can by no means be doubted."[1] When the Clugniac revival of religion in the Catholic church produced a purification and great extension of monastic orders until the monastic ideal of life was accepted as the Catholic Christian ideal, this layman's faith also grew and flourished. The story of Peter de Bruys, Henry of Lausanne, and Arnold of Brescia proves that they who maintained this other type of faith were by no means ignorant people. Their success in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy created alarm in the ranks of the orthodox. For they undermined the very foundations of the Catholic system. Infant baptism, intercessions for the dead, sacrifices, prayers to saints, consecration of holy days and places, veneration of relics, and similar practices were powerfully attacked, and that not merely on rational grounds, but on the ground that these things violate the spirituality and moral purity of the Christian faith. Their ideal was likeness to Jesus in the common relations of life.

The great work of the Waldenses in translating the Scriptures into the vernacular and circulating them far and wide drew upon these devoted people the persecuting zeal of the monks. The deadly inquisition for heresy was set to work. The story of its horrors cannot be told here, nor the story of the splendid resistance of these evangelicals. Suffice it to say that, while these people were forced to do most of their work in secret, the faith they held could not be extirpated. When the church became more and more entangled in politics and forgot

[1] *History of Antipaedobaptism*, p. 28.

the needs of the masses, increasing multitudes got more and more out of hand and followed their own inclination. The result was the appearance of two popular types of religion side by side. The one was the priestly, sacramental religion that multiplied its rites and its intercessors, that went on great pilgrimages to holy shrines, that prayed to Mary and a host of departed "saints," that paid for prayers and masses, that frequented the confessional, that purchased indulgences, that trembled at the prospect of the Judgment Day and hell, and shrank in terror from Christ, the awful Judge. The other was a religion that revered the words of Jesus, that tried to follow his steps, that nurtured love and a tender conscience, whose priests were the whole communion of believers, whose invisible altars were on the common highways of life—a religion that sought the favor neither of princes nor of ecclesiastics, and that appeared at its best in the family circle and not in the monastery or the nunnery. It was intelligent because it was particularly a Bible-reading religion.

This was the main religious source of Protestantism. But for its antecedent operations throughout Europe, Luther would probably never have been heard from or would have spoken to deaf ears. If Protestantism was characterized by its emphasis on the authority of the Bible, the explanation lies here. It was not simply because of the exigencies of controversy. It was not simply because it was found that the weapon which the Catholic church had forged for its own defense when it made a canon of sacred Scripture could be used to smite its maker to the ground. But it was mainly because the spirit that inspired Protestant religion and enabled it

to endure the storms of the times had been, and continued to be, nourished on the Bible.

Tributary to this powerful current was the growing demand for a morality that would be personal and pure. If it is true that the penitential system of the church grew out of the effort to train the rude masses in a knowledge of the obligations of the Christian life, it is also true that the necessity of securing large funds for its purposes led the church to turn its penitential system into a method of evading direct responsibility and of bargaining for absolution from guilt. The moral reforms which the monks sought tended to arouse sluggish consciences for a time, but the monastic institutions tended in a double way to aggravate the evils of the times. For the ascetic ideal tends to the disparagement of the common things of life and, consequently, to the minimizing of moral failure in common things. Also, the very success of monasticism and its admission to a high place in the church's system led to a corruption of monastic morals to such an extent that the common people in many places looked upon the cassock of the priest and the begging-bowl of the friar with unconcealed scorn. Neither of them could be trusted at large. Lay morality was higher than the morality of the priest and the monk.

Another tributary influence sprang from the growing sense of personal worth. The gradual breakdown of the older feudalism and the reduction of the serf or villein who was bound to the soil to the level of the chattels of a distant master were matched by the development of commerce in connection with the crusades, the growth of large cities, the increasing demands for artisans in these cities, the substitution of the money-wage for pay-

ment in kind, the organization of workingmen's guilds for mutual advantage and the higher exaltation of the individual. The new industrial and social conditions in the cities aroused new hopes in the minds of the country peasantry. Organizations of the peasantry became numerous and powerful. They began to insist on the recognition of rights hitherto denied them. The rising wave of peasant feeling was deeply imbued with the spirit of religion. Intrepid leaders appeared. The Lollards in England, the Hussites in Bohemia, the leagues of the Bundschuh in Germany, were all inspired with a similar spirit. The attempt of the Empire, on the one hand, and of the Church, on the other hand, to impose upon the people an imperial system that would reduce them all to virtual serfdom only stimulated the risings the more. The Swiss peasants won a great victory and their independence from their imperial masters. The hope of like conquests spread like wildfire throughout Central Europe. Democracy raised its head. The man, kept down by ages of ignorance and oppression, was coming to himself.

There was also the influence of the growing nationalism of Europe. The national spirit was abroad. It supervened upon feudalism. Both emperors and popes feared it, for it contested their claims, and ultimately thwarted the ambitions of both. The affirmation of national rights became a rallying-cry for those who protested against the pecuniary exactions of the papacy and the draining away of the country's revenues to fill the coffers of a foreign prelate. The English, the Scotch, the French, and the Spaniards were rapidly realizing their national ambitions. The Wycliffian Reformation

in England and the Hussite Reformation in Bohemia owed their success in no small degree to their intimate connection with the national aspirations in both countries. National aspirations were rising among the Germans, the Dutch, the Italians, and elsewhere. The papacy first and the Empire next were the chief outer obstacles to the realization of these hopes. Religion took on a national character. The aim of bringing the church in each country under the control of the government of the country gained backing steadily. Protestantism gave the signal to make the religion of the land a function of the state. The state was no longer to be viewed as merely secular, no longer of merely earthly origin. It was founded by heaven and its rights were divine. The natural had become the holy.

A single word only need be said about the Renaissance. The revival of learning affected directly at first only the intellectuals, but its influence was bound to permeate whole communities in course of time. It liberated the mind from bondage to authority in the realm of knowledge and thereby gave support to the growing religious freedom. It revived the interest in the distant past and stimulated a search for the true Christian beginnings. It opened the way to new interpretations of the Christian Scriptures. It reaffirmed the competency of the human reason to discover truth in any realm. It brought the pretensions of many of the accredited church leaders into contempt by exposing their ignorance. It strengthened confidence in the worth of the natural as against a narrow supranaturalism. It gave new strength to the scientific impulse and the desire for discovery and invention in all realms of

knowledge. It threw broadcast the invitation to come to nature and learn her secret from herself.

Protestantism was an outcome of the union of these forces and the penetration of them all by the spirit of religious revival. The manner in which they were combined varied greatly in different countries and in different groups in the same countries, but it is not difficult to discover one prevailing trend amid their differences. This, I trust, will become manifest by an analysis of Protestantism from various points of view.

2. THE PROTESTANT RELIGIOUS SPIRIT

A classic expression of the inner religious life of Protestantism is found in the answer to the first question in the Heidelberg Catechism: "What is thy only comfort in life and in death?" Answer:

> That I, with body and soul, both in life and in death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ, who with his precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins, and redeemed me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head; yea, all things must work together for my salvation. Wherefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me heartily willing and ready henceforth to live unto him.

In this popular statement the three great mountain peaks of the Protestant religious consciousness stand out clearly: *loyalty to a personal God, confidence in the orderly course of the universe, the sense of inner worth.* The different Protestant communions vary in the intelligence and firmness with which they hold to these fundamentals and in the emphasis they place upon them, respectively, but these convictions are characteristic of them all.

First: *The religion of the Protestant consists primarily in the consciousness of the immediate personal relation with God.* In the answer to the first question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism it is stated theologically: "What is the chief end of man?" Answer: "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever." Here there is no blind or confused groping after an unknowable essence of deity or divinity, no vague surmise of the presence of an ineffable Somewhat, of a Silence or Abyss beyond all the range of human intelligence, but the affirmation of a direct contact with a personality as real and as definite in his existence as we are. Protestant theology may not have lived up to this standard always, but this is the Protestant faith. There can be no toleration of an effort to interpose anything between God and the soul, for this would be an insult to the divine prerogative and an injury to the human spirit. God reveals himself to man and confers good gifts upon him according to his own will. Man prays to God directly and obeys or disobeys on his own behalf. Hence the Protestant love for simplicity in worship. Hence the sternness with which the Protestants repudiated the mediatorial system of the Catholic church—its spurious sacraments, its prescribed devotions, its priestly intercessions and absolutions, its saints, its holy seasons of fasts and feasts, and its legalistic regulations—not merely because they were absurd and vain, but because they were profane and wicked, a violation of the rights of man and a usurpation of the authority of God. Hence the determination of Protestants to reduce the tangled mass of teachings and usages that had held the multitudes so long in spiritual bondage, to

the simplicity that they believed to have existed in the original faith of Christians. Hence also their repudiation of ecclesiastical authority in favor of the real authority of those Scriptures that came directly from God.

The religious view of God carried with it a religious view of the Bible. The demand for certainty in our relations with God implied a need for a pure expression of his will. This the Protestants found in the Christian (and Jewish) Scriptures. Whatever we may now say as to the value of the presuppositions with which they approached the study of the Bible or as to the value of their methods of interpretation, there can be no doubt that they made an honest attempt to understand its true and original meaning, and that, not in the interest of historical or literary knowledge, but in the interest of their religious faith. They revered it as the "pure word of God" and sought to obey its instructions as the commands of God. The Catholic church had utilized the Bible in the interest of a system, but the Protestants sought to find in it the disclosure of the mutual approach of God and man, and to them largely we owe the exaltation of its religious value, even if, as we must confess, they often subordinated it to a system of doctrines partly derived from another source.

The Protestant religious spirit moved between a negative and a positive pole. The *negative* pole was a sense of ill-desert. The catechumen who studied the Heidelberg Confession learned to speak of "my sins" in the very first sentence he uttered. The sense of sin lay heavily on the conscience of those believers. The language of the Fifty-first Psalm was spontaneous to them and it was often on their lips. They accepted from

Catholicism and Augustine the doctrine of original sin because it seemed to utter the truth of their experience, and they intensified its meaning and tried to take it in its most fearful sense. When they spoke of sin it was not a metaphysical defect or want of true knowledge they had particularly in mind, but the contrast of the human character when they contemplated the holiness of God. Sin was moral, it was rebellion, it was spiritual turpitude, it was ill-desert; and they could find no better expression of its unworthiness than the Catholic doctrine of an endless hell of torment. Nevertheless, when they thought of God, the principal emphasis was not upon sin.

The *positive* pole of the Protestant religious spirit was a consciousness of being the recipient of grace. Here these believers followed Augustine and, like him, they emphasized the greatness of their sin all the more because they believed that thereby they exalted the divine grace. The sense of sin was only the dark background of the picture of their inner life. Their spirit was not gloomy in the end, but it was filled with a joyful confidence. This is what made their tremendous achievements possible. They were filled with the feeling of dependence on God, but it was not the dependence of the mere suppliant or beggar, or of the hopeless criminal on his way to the gallows. It was the dependence of one who was aware that the divine love had flowed out upon him and made him a being of the higher order. It was the dependence of the loved one upon the lover, such a dependence as finds its best expression in a loyal and hearty self-surrender. "I, with body and soul, both in life and in death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ." This is one of the things that

made the doctrine of election and predestination so dear to them; it confirmed the assurance of the divine favor.

This union of the sense of sin and the assurance of grace rested on a vision of the cross of Christ. It was not that they contemplated the picture of his suffering as valuable for its own sake. It was not that they were trying, after the Catholic fashion, to repeat in their own souls the agonies of Jesus on the cross as the perfection of asceticism, but it was because they believed that "where sin abounded grace did abound the more exceedingly," and in the suffering of Christ they saw this principle in operation as an act of God himself. It was not the suffering of the cross so much as its moral significance that made it the center of their faith. They could live henceforth confidently and trustfully because this supreme gift assured all other good.

Secondly: *The faith of Protestantism appears in its attitude of assured confidence rather than trembling anxiety toward the course of the world.* While mysticism sought to scorn the world, while Catholicism viewed it mostly with mingled fear and contempt, Protestantism takes a positive religious interest in it. Notwithstanding the occasional lapses of Calvinists, and notwithstanding the perpetuation of their Catholic inheritance of the view that nature had been corrupted and that the ills of this life are made great in order that our hearts might be weaned from it and prepared for the world to come, the Protestants drew great spiritual comfort and inspiration from the contemplation of the world of nature and of man. Lacking the modern scientific view of the constancy of nature, they enjoyed a religious anticipation

of it in the conviction that events in the material world—from the movements of a planet to the stirrings of a blade of grass—and events of human history, even of the most trifling and seemingly fortuitous kind—from the bad deeds of wicked men to the sublimest sacrifices of good men—came under the direct control of an unerring and kind Providence. It was in no spirit of cold speculation or fatalism that the Westminster Confession asserted that "God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass," but because it was, as Calvin held, the essential postulate of "the inestimable felicity of a pious mind." It was not that these people had consciously worked out a speculative view of the universe or fancied that they could demonstrate the truth of such a hypothesis, but because they had a consciousness of the indispensability of the divine presence at all times. They must see God everywhere in order to be at peace in the midst of the turmoils of their time. What seemed inexplicable in a world that he made they felt must be governed "by the secret counsel of God." Everything in the world had a religious significance to them. Even inanimate objects "exert their force only in so far as directed by the immediate hand of God." They were not unaware of the danger to faith and to morality in such a view, but they were willing to endure those risks for the sake of the assurance it gave that "all things must work together for my salvation." This abiding sense of subjection, with all things, to God's will was quite in keeping with the Protestant conviction that there was free access to him in every place and all the world was a sanctuary.

Thirdly: *Protestant religious faith embraced a consciousness of holy inspiration, purification of heart, and strength of will.* The Protestants felt themselves superior to Catholics because the latter fell back on a belief in the mysterious gifts supposedly communicated in symbols, and lacked that "secret testimony of the Spirit" that gave the light of noonday to the human soul. It is true that utterances of Protestant piety abound in confessions of utter unworthiness and even worthlessness, but that was meant to refer to men apart from the grace of God—which was not their true self. It was this that enabled the Protestants to dispense with the absolutions of priests, the mediation of saints, and the voice of the church to certify the truth to them, because they had the truth within them, because they felt that a pure heart could never receive punishment from God, and because he who receives the divine assurance of blessedness in his soul can accept no other. Hence it was that they so often—extravagantly, it seems to us—regarded those who opposed their convictions as *ipso facto* enemies of God. Their doctrine of the Scriptures became a protection to them against the dangers of fanaticism to which such a faith made them subject. Indeed, it must be pointed out that they went so far as to persecute with extreme severity those who carried this sense of the indwelling of the divine Spirit to the whole length, and it sometimes became a very weak factor in Protestant life.

3. THE PROTESTANT ESTIMATE OF HUMAN LIFE—ITS MORAL OUTLOOK

It will hardly be contended that people who were ready to put men into prisons or send them to death because of a refusal to accept their beliefs on the highest

and most difficult of all questions, or who regarded a large portion of the human race as heirs of the misdeeds of another and the inevitable consequences of those misdeeds by eternal divine decree and without their consent in advance, or who sentenced men to everlasting suffering for the glory of God, could have possessed the most exalted conception of the worth and sacredness of human life. Yet it is true that Protestantism maintained a high estimate of the human personality notwithstanding these shocking facts. Indeed, one might almost say that these very defects bear partial testimony to the dignity of the Protestant view of man.

In the bloody persecution of Catholics and other "heretics" the Protestants proved that they had learned only too well the lesson that Catholicism had taught them. Human life appears of comparatively small account when it may be destroyed for a difference of opinion. On the continent of Europe in those days men generally felt small compunction on account of killing men for these differences. In England it was otherwise. Queen Mary was nicknamed "the Bloody," though she had executed for their faith *only* two hundred and odd people. On the Continent she would have been regarded as rather merciful. The Protestant statesmen of Elizabeth's reign declared that they had put none to death for their religious beliefs. But this was exceptional among Protestants. How it harmonized with the Protestant contention for the right of individual interpretation of Scripture cannot be shown. At the same time it does bear testimony to their view that men can be held responsible for their opinions.

It is somewhat the same with the Protestant view of an endless hell. That Christian men should be able to face with comparative complacency the prospect of such a fate awaiting the majority of mankind seems now incredible, or at least inexplicable. How can it be said that the human personality is sacred if it be true that "by the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others *foreordained to everlasting death*," that "their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished," and that the second class "shall be cast into eternal torments"? And yet it must be said that this terrible doctrine can be taken, not so much as an essential view of Protestantism, but rather as a perversion of the profound conviction that the moral issues of a human life are so solemn that by nothing short of their eternal outcome can we estimate their meaning.

Taking such statements, then, not as adequate or correct expressions of the fundamental Protestant estimate of the worth of human life, we may see in them a clue to the Protestant conviction in this regard. That is to say, the value of the human personality is based not so much upon its aesthetic or its intellectual powers as upon its ethical quality and its moral possibilities. Human destiny is twofold because there are just two alternatives before men, and these are morally determined.

First: *Human conduct must always be interpreted in its relation to a holy, commanding will.* This will has been revealed to men in an inviolable law—the everlasting "thou shalt" and its answer, "I ought." This law,

though manifold in its injunctions, is one in principle. A transgression of it in any one particular is a violation of the whole. It covers every relation in life and therefore it can be satisfied with nothing short of absolute holiness, unexceptional obedience. Its majesty is ineffable, its validity eternal!

There can be no compromise with its demands. There can be no neutrality toward it, there can be no division of loyalty to it. There can be no middle ground between obedience and disobedience. Therefore there can be no trifling with it, no exceptions to the moral imperative, no slackening of its claims, no compounding of felonies. As every crime is a sin and every sin a crime, punishment must be without compunction or reserve. The sanctions of the law are inevitable. The dual destiny is essential to its authority. This it was, more than anything else, that led to the severity with which the demoralizing practices of the Catholic church were repressed in Protestant countries. The sale of indulgences and other modes of bargaining with the moral law were not simply foolish and vain in the eyes of the Reformers, but they were wicked and deserving of punishment. Unfortunately, we must add, this same sternness of moral judgment had something to do with the extravagant penalties that were visited by the courts on delinquents in Protestant countries. The grandeur of the Protestant conscience was sometimes turned into a spectacle of horror.

Secondly: *While Catholicism accentuated the negative side of morality, Protestantism laid its emphasis on the positive side.* It was not the qualities of renunciation, resignation, or self-obliteration that charmed the Protestant soul, but the exercise of the positive qualities of

industry, courage, and determination. The Kingdom of God was to be won, not by retirement from the tasks of common life, but in the vigorous prosecution of them. Among the saints of Protestantism were the men of affairs. So insistent were the Reformers on the highest standards for all that they repudiated the idea of a gradation among Christians according to the degree to which they severally conformed to an ideal. The demands of the standard of life were absolute.

In this way the new form of Christian faith inculcated in its adherents a deep self-respect, a self-affirmation that threatened at times to degenerate into self-assertion. The man was elevated consciously above the organizations or the society in which he found himself. Against the very institutions that had nurtured him he rose up in protest because of their defects. He judged and denounced the society that had conserved the very moral interests that he held dear, because it fell short of its own ideals. He went even farther. He challenged the very ideals to which he had been bred and called men to the higher. The Protestant was essentially a moral progressive, a reformer. He found no resting-place for his feet; he must ever go forward. Pure conservatism was stagnation and stagnation was death, the very negation of the moral. It was natural, then, that division should occur in the Protestant ranks as they sought the higher ideals. It was healthful, too. For it was not conformity to type—much as some Protestants sought it—that gave Protestantism its solidity, but in the inner imperative to transcend all types it found its firmness and stability. For the soul of Protestantism was in the man and not in the system. "Here I stand, I can no

otherwise," said Luther before the Diet of Worms—the man confronting the system and in those very words placing beneath the system a bomb that blew it into fragments!

Protestant morality is constructive. It builds from within rather than from without. It has more confidence in the power of personal initiative to work the good of humanity than in external restraint or constraint. It seeks unity, but the unity that dreads uniformity; a *unity* into which men grow and not a *union* that forbids growth. Thus, notwithstanding its oft-repeated theological dogma of human depravity, its confidence reposed in that very human nature which Catholicism had taught its leaders to describe as fallen and destitute of good. Hence the Protestant churches, while insisting that good works—such "good works" as the Catholic church required as the condition of salvation—were in no sense saving, demanded, nevertheless, that the fruits of salvation should be manifested by everyone in good works. The Calvinistic churches, in particular, exercised a severe discipline over their members and even found in good works the assurance of their divine election.

Thirdly: *The ethics of Protestantism stands for the wholesomeness and sanctity of the natural.* Catholicism has put the stigma of uncleanness upon the natural. Natural modes of life and natural institutions were unholy until they had been brought under the cleansing power of the church's sacraments. Even the wedded life and the propagation of the race are traced to evil, that is, fleshly concupiscence, until by subjection to the sacrament of marriage the evil character of it is purged. But notwithstanding the use of the sacrament of mar-

riage, the highest life, true Christian perfection, is found in celibacy. The wedded life, parenthood, are placed on a lower grade. The orthodox Catholic view of the natural institution of marriage seemed to the Protestants to carry with it a derogatory view of many other natural modes of life and the forms of their development, such as industry, trades, commerce, and the duties of civil and political life in general.

From the first stages of its progress Protestantism consciously joined issue with Catholicism at this point. The Augsburg Confession argues:

> The commandments of God and the true worship of God are obscured when men hear that monks alone are in that state of perfection; because that Christian perfection is this, to fear God sincerely, and, again, to conceive great faith and to trust assuredly that God is pacified toward us for Christ's sake: to ask, and certainly to look for, help from God in all our affairs, *according to our calling;* and outwardly to do good works diligently and *to attend to our vocation.* In these things doth true perfection and the true worship of God consist: *it doth not consist in singleness of life, in beggary, or in vile apparel.* [All italics are mine.]

The Protestants held that in the purity of the natural family relation the basis was laid for the purity of all those forms of industry and civil life which guard the family interest and supply the family's needs. Here was the foundation of the view that the whole of humanity may be regarded as one great family founded in nature and therefore divine.

The Protestant sees the ideal of womanhood, not in the pale face and upturned eyes of her that wears the garb of the nun, but rather in the mother heart and busy life of her who stands with uprolled sleeves before the washtub or rocks her baby to sleep in her arms or cares

for the food and clothing of the inmates of the home. He sees the ideal of manhood, not in him of the shaven head or priestly gown who has scorned the love of the sexes, the affections and the trials of the home, the bargaining at the market-place, the administration of a city, or the execution of law and justice in the state; but he sees the truly Christian man in him of the brawny arm and busy brain who plunges into the common things of life as his Father's business and finds the fulfilment of his heart's ambitions in the secular task of every day. When one finds that it is the Protestant peoples who are progressive in morals, in knowledge, in industry, and in politics, it is only what one should expect.

4. PROTESTANTISM AS A THEORY OF TRUTH—ITS DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

On this involved and weighty subject it is not possible to say more than a few words in the present connection.

It is to be remembered from the outset that while Catholicism is fundamentally institutional, Protestantism is fundamentally personal. Catholicism has its sacraments; Protestantism has its truth. Catholicism insists on assent; Protestantism on faith. Catholicism inculcates submission; Protestantism inculcates knowledge. Catholicism, accordingly, regards its doctrines as legal requirements, as preconditions of receiving the church's benefits; Protestantism regards its doctrines as the very life of the soul, as the knowledge of the way of God to the heart of the man and the way of the man to the heart of God. Protestantism, therefore, takes its doctrines more seriously than Catholicism and takes

special pains to inculcate them. Thus, while the ritual is central to Catholic worship, the preaching or instruction is central to Protestant worship. The priest gives place to the teacher and the sacraments to the doctrine.

The doctrines which Protestantism inherited from the Catholic church take on new vigor. For example, the Protestant orthodox creeds accept, and renew allegiance to, the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity and the two natures of Christ. With the Catholic church these had become mysteries to be received without insight into their worth and they had lost their original meaning for the masses (and probably for the priests), having a sort of legal value only. The Protestant theologians renewed the vigor of these beliefs by impressing on the minds of men the need of a mediatorial sufferer to bear the guilt of sinful men, the actual enjoyment of the favor of God, and the certainty of an inner conscious renewal and fellowship with God in the Spirit. The old doctrines lived again, though in a very different sense from that which they had in the earlier times. The doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of the God-man expressed the Protestant experience. There was a reconstruction, but from a different point of view.

If the heart of ancient Catholic piety lay in the longing for infinitude and immortality, the longing of the Protestant heart was for righteousness, the deliverance from guilt, and the peace and power of mind which righteousness produces. The redemption which Protestantism sought was not escape from materiality and death, but escape from condemnation. Its great doctrines begin really with its conception of justification. That is,

God was first of all the Lord and Judge of mankind. The solemn scene of the court room is the best symbol of his relations with us. The redemption of the sinner takes the form of a process at law. It can occur only through the satisfaction of offended justice, and this can be only on condition of someone's bearing the penalty. The hopelessness of man is relieved by the appearing of a God-sent, divine-human sufferer who bears the eternal penalty and frees the sinner. The whole is an act of the unmerited and infinite grace of God.

It was natural that, when assurance of this great gift was sought, the answer to the inquiring heart should be first given in the affirmation that men are justified through faith and not by their works. Then, when it became necessary to assure men that the basis of such an estimate of faith was safe, the answer took the form of a doctrine of atonement. The center of gravity was transferred from an inward experience to an objective, divinely constituted reality. But there was incomplete satisfaction in this view till it was determined whether *I* and *you* are among those who are thus actually redeemed, whether there is absolute certainty of our redemption. The answer now takes the form of a doctrine of divine election and foreordination. And thus, at length, at the hands of the Calvinistic theologians, the whole career of mankind from the eternity of the past to the eternity of the future was construed as the outworking of an absolutely irresistible and sure divine purpose that involves the everlasting and unchangeable destiny of each and all according as the inscrutable will of God determined from eternity. Thus Protestant theology became a theory of God's government of the

universe. The glory of God is everything and the desires and rights of the individual man pass out of sight.

It is plain that the theoretical basis of Protestant doctrine was Paulinism interpreted through Augustine. More exactly, the Pauline experience and the Pauline exposition of sin and grace, narrowed to the Augustinian experience and theory of world-government, were treated as the heart of the gospel and the clue to the Scriptures. Everything else was brought to the test of this touchstone. Reformation theology was largely in substance a commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. The methods of the Protestant theologians were those of the Roman Catholic theologians purged of extravagances and ecclesiastical claims. Natural theology is accepted as far as it goes. It is supplemented and corrected by the Bible, which is the full and final revelation of God's plan of salvation. The teachings of the Scriptures were a unit. There was little attention to their historical setting, and more and more they tended to become a law for thinking as well as for life. Speculations and queries tending to bring theological dogmas into question were dismissed as impertinent and profane.

5. PROTESTANTISM ON ITS INSTITUTIONAL SIDE

Here Protestantism stood rather between Catholicism and mysticism. It had not the Catholic realistic idea of the church. Christianity was greater than church. The invisible and spiritual "church" was greater than the visible and temporal church. Salvation was found only in the former, but was not dependent truly on the latter. And yet Protestantism was not clear on this

point. It shrank from a full abandonment of the Catholic view of the efficacy of sacraments.

Sometimes, especially among Calvinists, there was held a legalistic view of the church. The Bible was the lawbook prescribing its forms and its activities. Others, like some Anglicans and Lutherans, held to a looser view of the church and were more concerned to secure the independence of the state than the freedom of the church. Others, again, like the Anabaptists and the (later) Baptists, held firmly to the freedom of the church and had little to say positively of the state. On the whole, it is to be said that the Protestants found in their Christian faith a purifying and strengthening influence working upon the natural institutions of human life and raising the common to the level of the holy. Thus, instead of the divine origin of the ecclesiastical order, Protestantism tended to exalt the divine sanction of the civil order. In place of the divine right of popes there was the divine right of kings or princes or parliaments. Instead of the supremacy of the priest in the life of the household there was the supremacy of the parent. Protestantism, therefore, on the whole, interpreted Christianity not as institutional but as a supernatural transforming energy working through the natural institutions of men and exalting them to be the natural instruments of God's grace as it works out a heavenly, beneficent purpose.

CHAPTER V

RATIONALISM

The term "rationalism," like so many other hybrids, is commonly used by controversialists in a somewhat derogatory sense. No such implication is intended in the present discussion. To some readers, however, it may occasion surprise to find rationalism treated as one of the typical interpretations of Christianity, for people have been accustomed to hearing it characterized as a foe to Christianity and, indeed, to all religion. For they will say, perhaps, "Does it not seek to discredit the authority of the Bible? Does it not repudiate the essential Christian doctrines? Does it not deny the need or the reality of any revelation whatsoever? Does it not, in fact, ignore the supernatural altogether?"

That there have been forms of rationalism that, to the minds of their advocates, were synonymous with religious unbelief is not to be disputed. There have been not a few thinkers who, in the name of what they call reason, have undertaken to show the absurdity of religious hopes and beliefs. Such a type of rationalism is pretty sure to misinterpret the religion it seeks to combat. But in history there has appeared also another type of rationalism that has sought to be friendly to religion, and particularly to Christianity, a rationalism that professes, not to destroy, but to fulfil faith by freeing it from the influence of ideas that seemed to confuse and corrupt it. There has been and there is a rationalism

that seeks to minister to faith by insisting that the utterances of religion shall harmonize with the canons of thought.

It is not easy to define rationalism. It lacks the concreteness of Catholicism and Protestantism. We cannot point to any institution or mode of religious life that professes to embody it. It lacks the distinctness of mysticism, for it does not seek retirement from the world, but professes an intimate relation to everything we do or say. Moreover, all men claim to be rational, though, according to Carlyle, there are comparatively few who can make good the claim! To be rational is to be possessed of reason, that is, the power of orderly, consistent thinking. But in addition to the power of thought there are other functions of nature or forms of experience, such as feeling and volition, which seem very different and almost, if not quite, independent of thought. Unthinking emotions seem to spring up from some unfathomed depth of our nature and to carry us on by the force of their impulse to unthought-of and unintended results. Many people seem to be governed by unreflecting feeling. Others, again, lack both thought and feeling, it would seem. For by the mere force and doggedness of will they do things which set both human feelings and human thinking at naught. A rationalist in general is one who, while recognizing a place for the play of feeling and of will in our nature, seeks to subordinate both to the controlling force of thought. He stands for the rightful supremacy of intellect in men. Emotion and will are wayward and fitful in themselves and they may become wanton and harmful. Mere animalism lies in that direction. The distinctive dig-

nity of man consists in that intelligent discernment or judgment which makes him superior to all the fluctuations of feeling and volition and gives his life an order and steadiness like that of the ordered cosmos around him. Thought is legislative in relation to emotion and will. Man understands, man reasons, he is logical. That is what makes him man. A rationalist in religion is one who stands for the absolute supremacy of the logical understanding in the determination of the true and the false in religion as in everything else.

It is held, then, that a direct contradiction in anything is intolerable. The illogical is the false. Men cannot permanently believe anything but the truth, whether it be in matters of fact or of conduct or of faith. Science is concerned with matters of fact, ethics with matters of conduct, and theology with matters of faith or religion. The principle that determines ultimately what is to be held for truth is the same in all three realms. This means, then, that as little as, for example, science can endure a contradiction in fact, so also it is impossible to admit a contradiction between science and ethics or theology. Anything that would destroy the harmony between these is to be rejected. Nothing can be held to be theologically true that is scientifically false. A true religion is one whose doctrines are true and a false religion is one whose doctrines are false. Religion must stand the logical test.

Now, in assigning this primacy to the logical understanding we are assigning to it at the same time priority. It is the first in the field. Apart from it nothing whatever is known. It discovers truth. All supposed truth

that is communicated to us through extraordinary channels, whether it be by revelation or by mystical or subconscious processes, is to be compelled to make good its claim by being built upon the prior truth of the reason. Reason is the true organ of all knowledge in all realms. The true religion is, in the end, the religion of reason. There can be no other. If we hold that Christianity is the one true religion, it is because in it reason comes to her highest utterance or self-expression. This, it seems to me, is the position of a thoroughgoing "Christian rationalism."

It will be admitted that religious people commonly shrink from applying this rigid test to their own faith, even if they do apply it to the faith of others. There seems to be something dearer to them than logic. They will persist in believing things which seem to others illogical and impossible. In fact, all the historical religions have had traditions of occurrences that seem to defy the power of reason to explain or justify. They have been characterized by explosions of emotion or daring acts of will that offend the sober sense of conventional humanity and boldly challenge reason to do its worst—and apparently with success. A stalemate often arises. Reason, it seems, *cannot* abandon its prerogative, and religion *will* not. One shrinks from disorder. The other shrinks from the commonplace, the conventional, the uninspiring. It is no uncommon thing to find men even of great intellectual power and willing to accord to reason a directive relation to external things at the same time scorning its claims to dictate the terms of religious belief. The great Tertullian, with all his confidence that the soul was naturally Christian, neverthe-

less shrank not from flouting reason in the realm of faith: "I believe, because it is absurd." Luther, while granting the value of reason in morals and even while inferring on rational grounds the existence of an eternal divine being, called reason a harlot when it claimed to discern and judge the higher "things of the Spirit." Reason has only a negative place in religion. It comprehends what God is not, but cannot comprehend what God is. Therefore Luther could still believe in the saving efficacy of sacraments, though reason denied it. Nothing is more common in great popular revivals of religion than to find people under the power of torrents of emotion scouting all appeals to consistent reflection because they feel themselves carried into a realm that reason cannot reach.

It is when people attempt to explain their religion or to justify it by bringing it into relation to the common conditions of life that they get into trouble. For to explain it is to rationalize it. This is precisely what is attempted in theology. The effort to interpret one's religion is an effort to assign to it an orderly and constant place in the spiritual world to which we belong. The attempt to prove the occurrence of a miracle or explain the significance of a miracle is, in effect, an attempt to show that, so far from its being an inexplicable or wanton occurrence, it conveys an intelligible meaning to us; that is, the belief in it is rational. The same is true of the attempt to establish or expound the truth of a revelation. Indeed, all theorizing in support of religion is of the nature of an attempt to naturalize the supernatural in our thinking, to make the sway of reason coextensive with the experience of the highest realities. No wonder,

therefore, that this should result in testing religion by the canons of thought and in tracing its origin, in part at least, to thought.

It has come about somewhat naturally that in the histories of rationalism, its critical—particularly negatively critical—side has received the emphasis. In the progress of Christianity rationalism has attacked the superstitions and immoralities of paganism and prepared the way for the higher faith. It has appeared as a protest against the dim, dreamy, and indescribable self-contemplation of the mystics or as a reaction against the hallucinations, visions, trances, or absurdities of a crude and enthusiastic revivalism. It has attacked the sacerdotalism and sacramentalism that constitute the Catholic system and prepared the way for a Protestantism that dissolved that system. It has turned upon the Protestantism that it helped to create and has undermined its professions of a supernatural authority for its doctrines. Or, again, it has pricked the bubbles of a soaring speculation and exposed its vacuity. One might almost say that the rationalist is he who claims to be the exponent of "common sense," were it not that in seeking so persistently to explain he ends so often by explaining away. Rationalism seems to feed on other systems.

If we seek to reduce the contentions of rationalism to their ultimate basis we may say that they repose on three pillars: first, the constancy and value of the natural order of the universe; second, the competency of the human mind to discover that order; third, the adequacy of this discovery for our practical needs. The first of these is commonly admitted to be an assumption underlying science and philosophy in their final sweep.

There is a universe; two universes are an impossibility. This universe embraces all objects of possible knowledge, whether they be presented to us by external perception or by introspection. It is a universe in which change is observed, but the changes are continuous and regular. It is a universe of a developing order. If we distinguish the spiritual order from the material order, nevertheless, in the end, both are reducible to one, which we may call the order of nature. But when it comes to the question of the method of procedure in discovering that order, the question remains open whether we shall proceed from a knowledge of the spiritual to the material, or the reverse. The second assumption flows from the first, since an order of nature undiscoverable by us has no meaning for us. If the world has a meaning for us we must be competent to discover it. The mind knows only that which it discovers. The third assumption is the logical inference from the other two. We live in the universe and our practice must accord with its character if life is not to be futile. Rationalism, therefore, reposes on a confidence in the capacity of the human mind, in the exercise of its native powers of knowledge, to supply safe and adequate direction to life. Religious rationalism, as a theory, is that interpretation of the material and spiritual worlds which regards them as expressing in the inner soul or consciousness of man the realities of the religious life; that is to say, the universe discloses to man the essential relations in which he stands to the Supreme Being—whatever these words may mean. Christian rationalism regards this rational interpretation of the universe as the same in content with the essential doctrines of Christianity.

1. RATIONALISM IN HISTORICAL CHRISTIANITY

In tracing the growth of the historical forms of the Christian faith one cannot avoid the recognition of the fact that the rationalistic attitude has always been a powerful factor. Even if many of the historic expressions of the faith have been seemingly without any marks of regard for the common reason of men, in the end they have always been obliged to give an account of themselves at its bar. For example, Christians have always believed that they were in possession of a revelation from God, and in times of spontaneous utterance of the deepest feelings that men can experience multitudes will claim that they have received a personal revelation. It was so in the first century of our era. But at such times there has always been some Paul to come forward bringing along with his acknowledgment that the revelation was real the demand that it be expressed in an orderly manner: "When ye come together, each one hath a psalm, hath a teaching, hath a revelation, hath a tongue, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. . . . . If there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church. . . . . The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets; for God is not a God of confusion." "In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding than ten thousand words in a tongue." Christians usually have felt bound in the end to justify their belief in a revelation by showing that it is in keeping with the nature of all knowledge and to that extent, at least, is rational. Christians have always believed also in miracles, but they have felt compelled to justify the belief in the reality of miracles by showing that there is credible testimony

to their occurrence and that they meet a true need. This is just a way of saying that the belief is in accord with rational knowledge. To many this seems equivalent to the substitution of reason for revelation and miracle, or else an acknowledgment that the true revelation and the true miracle is reason. Let us glance rapidly down through the ages in which our present faith was in the making and see if it be so.

Judaism supplied the soil for the original planting of the Christian gospel. How variegated were the forms of Jewish religious life—the prophetic fire, the priestly love for the form of worship, the seer's forecast of terrible judgments! But the rhapsody of the prophet, the ritual of the priest, and the apocalypses of the seer were toned down by the sober sense of the sage. The Wisdom books are monumental of the tardy recognition of the truth that men can arrive at the happiness for which they seek in no other way than by an intelligent acquaintance with the laws of the orderly life and a hearty obedience to them. To be sure, with the Jews all the laws of life were regarded as the commandments of their God, and they never descended to mere moralism. At times their religious rationalism takes on a tone of sublime contemplation, as when the sage turns his gaze upon the wonders of the heavens or, again, upon the equal wonders of the human heart: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. . . . . The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is

pure, enlightening the eyes." To such men as this psalmist the world without and the world within answer to each other and together they utter the will of their God. Sometimes, as in portions of the Proverbs, this religious rationalism assumes a lower tone. The wise man may be wise only in the sense of having a shrewd appreciation of the laws of the orderly life because he can make them serve his self-interest. Does this mark an inherent defect in rationalism—a tendency to a narrow moralism?

The traces of rationalism in the New Testament are few and of minor importance. The appeal to the natural human judgment is not wanting. James extols the worth of genuine morality and Paul has a touch of natural theology: "That which is known of God is manifest in men; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made." But the overpowering impression of the personality of Jesus, the tragedy of his death, the triumph of his resurrection, and the new consciousness of power and of enlightenment in the hearts of his followers overshadowed all else. They were too much occupied with the impending cataclysm in human affairs and the universe to give themselves to the problems of the systematic thinker.

It was not long, however, before the attempt was made to construe in a rationalistic manner the Christian revelation itself and the miracles that accompanied it. As the gospel spread among the Graeco-Roman peoples, it attracted to it men of sobriety and learning, who hailed the Christian message with joy because it seemed to them

to bring back to life and vigor again those fundamental principles of morality that had been obscured or lost amid the social confusion of those times. The old philosophies had failed to give men the saving truth. Here was a new philosophy which was also the most ancient, for the Scriptures that contained it came from the earliest ages, by which confidence in the eternal distinction of right from wrong and in the eternal consequences of obedience and disobedience might be restored. They accepted Christianity as the revelation of the true morality. It was the affirmation of the true morality because it was the announcement of the knowledge of the true God by him who came from God. Holding to the philosophic principle of the Logos (the principle of reason immanent in God and active in man and the world), they said that the teaching of Jesus was one in substance and purport with the expression of the Logos. In truth, he it is who was originally the Logos of God, who became personal before the creation, who himself framed the world and the rational beings in it, and who at length "took shape, became a man, and was called Jesus Christ." The prophecies that foretold his coming and his acts and the miracles which he and his followers performed attest the truth of his teachings. Christianity, then, is essentially the true teaching, the divine doctrine, the inculcation of "the excellences which reside in him [God], temperance, and justice, and philanthropy, and as many virtues as are peculiar to a God who is called by no proper name"—in a word, moralism. By our concrete rationality we are able to receive a knowledge of his will: "In order that we may follow those things that please him, choosing them by means of the

rational faculties he has himself endowed us with, he both persuades us and leads us to faith." And, accordingly, "each man goes to everlasting punishment or salvation according to the value of his actions."

These apologists were really the founders of formal Christian theology. They tried to show that Christian faith was the belief and practice of those eternal principles of conduct which are identical in character and aim with that rational nature which is found in man and the universe. It may be fairly said, therefore, that the formal traditional theology began with a type of rationalism.

This early rationalism was soon overshadowed by the mystical and metaphysical interpretation of the ancient Catholic theologians—not without a struggle, however. For the growing orthodoxy found itself confronted by powerful opponents, conspicuous among whom were Arius and Pelagius. It is not possible here to exhibit the debate or expound the positions at length. Arianism, in short, stood for a conservative Logos doctrine. Its logic demanded the eternal validity of the distinction between the one true and only God and all else, including the Logos, the only begotten Son. If the Son was begotten, he had a beginning and was a creation of God. In the incarnate Christ the Logos takes the place of the rational human spirit. He mediated the revelation of God to men. Arian rationalism attempted to maintain a logical view of the relation of monotheism to belief in the revelation given to men in Christ.

Pelagianism was a protest against the Augustinian view of sin and grace which was adopted in part by Catholicism. It opposed the doctrine of original sin,

bondage of the will, universal human depravity, and absolute dependence on grace ministered in the sacraments. God is good and so also is man fundamentally. Man is free by nature and remains so. If he sins, it is always by choice and not by necessity. As he is capable of evil, so is he also capable of good. As he chooses evil by free choice, so also he chooses good freely. God's grace assists and does not compel. The revelation of Christ enlightens our minds as truth and aids our will by love. Life is a discipline and its outcome is self-determined and deserved. As Arianism attempted a rational view of the relation of God to men with respect to positive religion, Pelagianism attempted a rational view of the relation of God to men with respect to positive righteousness or goodness.

The darkness that fell upon Europe in the ages between the decline of the Roman Empire and the rise of the mediaeval empire began to pass away with the institution of the schools of Charlemagne and the monks and the awakening of interest in the ancient life of the East through the Crusades. The founding of the great European universities dates back to this time. The rescue of the precious documents of ancient Greek and Christian lore from the hand of the marauding Turk and the translation of them into the vernacular gave to the ecclesiastical scholars of the West a new vision. They became acquainted with the philosophy of Aristotle. The scientific and philosophic interest was aroused. Heretofore the saving dogmas of the Christian faith had been received with the same docile spirit with which men had received the ritual of the church—on authority. Why not strengthen the hold of the dogmas on men's

minds by giving them the support of reason? Why not prove that what is true by the authority of the church is also true by the authority of reason? If the church and reason speak with one voice, who can dispute their dogmas? The circumstances of the time threw out the challenge and there was at least a show of accepting it. Scholasticism, the philosophy of the church schools, was an attempt to rationalize the traditional faith by the aid of Greek philosophy.

In a preceding chapter reference was made to a powerful religious movement of the Middle Ages that flourished outside the church and threatened its power. Here is a parallel movement that began mainly under ecclesiastical control. But who could be sure that it would remain there? What if human reason and a supposed divine authority could not be made to concur? What if they should turn out to be two steeds that tend to run apart? Then the rider must make his choice. So it was with the scholastic in the end. The enterprise was undertaken with boldness and acclaim. The famous Anselm offered his demonstration of the necessary existence of God and proceeded to justify also the dogma of the incarnation, the central dogma of Catholicism, on the ground of rational necessity. Others followed in his footsteps until the great Thomas Aquinas outlined a whole system of dogmas rationally grounded. But doubt was also stimulated. The keen wit of Abelard exhibited in his *Sic et Non* ("Yes and No") the hopeless contradictions in the Fathers to whose authority the church had deferred. John Duns Scotus showed that reason could not be made to give its free assent to the dogmas. Gradually the failure became patent. The

church had to place its dogmas on a height inaccessible to reason in order to save them. The situation in the Catholic church is virtually the same at this present time. Modernism has been trying in vain to restore to human thinking its right, but without success. Roman Catholic Christianity is the Christianity of authoritative dogmas that defy reason. Rationalism can only be sporadic in Catholicism.

In Protestantism conditions are quite different. For the Reformation owed its birth, in part, to the new learning. It was unable to live without a recognition of the inexpugnable rights of human reason. Its friends were able to defend it successfully by affirming the right of the individual intelligence to interpret the will of God for itself and by virtue of its inherent worth. The right to interpret the will of God embraced the right to determine what is the will of God. The principle of rational criticism in its whole range was thereby secured. No matter if the Reformation theologians sought to limit the trustworthiness of reason in the religious realm by means of the doctrine of original sin, they had spoken the word that could not be withdrawn. The Reformation was a struggle for intellectual freedom as well as for moral purity and religious assurance. Personal faith and personal intelligence were wedded in the soul of the Protestant and could never be divorced without damage to one or both of them.

On its intellectual side the Reformation was more than a declaration of the right to freedom. It also issued a challenge to the human mind to carry its right into execution. The whole world of knowledge was thrown open for exploration. A mighty stimulus was given to

investigation in all directions. Many there were who gladly accepted the challenge. All truth was to be man's. But there was little preparation or mental equipment for the great task. It was one thing to declare that we can know and quite another thing to explain the steps by which we get possession of the facts of the universe or to vindicate the trustworthiness of the knowing process by exhibiting its constituent factors. As soon as the vastness of the regions waiting to be explored began to dawn on men's minds it was inevitable that a period of uncertainty and skepticism should supervene upon the glorious feeling of exaltation and relief that came with the Reformation.

The coming of a period of doubt was hastened and its character aggravated by the hastiness of the Protestant theologians in laying down statements of the essential doctrines of the Christian faith. Driven by the exigencies of ecclesiastical and political strife, they took a short cut to a settlement of questions of religious controversy. Answers to the profoundest questions that the human soul can ask were prescribed and enforced. Their doctrines were not meant to be provisional hypotheses or temporary aids to conduct, but authoritative declarations of divine truth. To the question, How were these truths communicated to man? the answer was, By revelation. To the question, Where is this revelation to be found? the answer was, In the Bible. And to the question, How do we know that the professed revelation is real? the answer of the ancient apologists was given, By the evidence of miracles, including prophecy. The last answer directed attention to a rational test, namely, the discovery, sifting, and weighing of

evidence, and it prepared the way for the undermining of the whole structure.

It was not possible for Protestants to follow the Catholic example by falling back on institutional authority. That door they had closed to themselves. The problem of knowledge, when once accepted, had to be worked out. The repeated efforts to define and redefine their doctrines so as to remove stumblingblocks to reason prove that the insistence of the demands of reason was felt. The failure of Protestant persecution to suppress doubt showed that there was no escaping the issues. Reason must be satisfied if faith is to live and triumph. This is a categorical imperative of the Protestant religious mind. Consequently we find, as we might have expected to find, in Protestant history the continual reappearing of rationalistic movements that sought, when faith and reason could not be made to speak in unison or in harmony, to subordinate faith to reason and to limit religion to the domain prescribed for her by the logical understanding. It is not possible to sketch in the present connection the various types of rationalism that have appeared in the history of Protestantism. Our references will be confined to those forms of rationalism that serve best to exhibit its general character.

2. THE PRINCIPLES AND DOGMAS OF RATIONALISM

The vast range of the rationalistic movement and the great number of the works of its noted representatives have given rationalism an exceedingly respectable place in the constitution of the modern Protestant religious mind. We shall now attempt to present an analysis

and brief exposition of its fundamental views by reviewing the positions of some of its representative thinkers.

We shall consider first the Socinians. Laelius and Faustus Socinus, uncle and nephew, came directly under the influence of Calvin, the first of the two being an intimate friend of the great theologian. Intellectually they were of the same type as he, as keen and relentless as he in their logic. They followed him in his idea of a revelation of God given to the reason of man through nature and also in his rational demonstration of the authority of Scripture, but significantly passed by that "secret testimony of the Spirit" to which he finally appealed. Like him, they viewed the Scriptures as a divinely given lawbook, but, unlike him, they distinguished thoroughly the New Testament from the Old Testament as the authority for Christian doctrine and, unlike him again, they found no place in the Scriptures for the great pillars of orthodox theology, the Trinity, the absolute deity of Christ, original sin, bondage of the will, foreordination, or atonement by penal substitution. To them the Christian religion was "the way of attaining to eternal life," that is, "the method of serving God which he has himself delivered through Jesus Christ." In short, Christianity was the revelation of the supreme law of life by obeying which men should be saved, a system of morality. The significant thing in Socinianism was not, however, the specific doctrines they held, but the ultimate basis for believing these doctrines. This, in short, they called "right reason." They said, "Without it we could neither perceive with certainty the authority of the sacred writings, understand their contents, discriminate one thing from another, nor apply

them to any practical purpose." Nothing was to be received "which is repugnant to the written word of God, or to sound reason." In the end, the Scriptures are to be believed because of their rationality. It mattered little, then, what particular doctrines they accepted or rejected, and it mattered little that their exegesis was often more accurate than the orthodox exegesis or that sometimes it was warped by their preferences, so long as the determinative factor in all religion was just this: that which it is rational to believe. Christianity was true because it was rational. Its teachings commended themselves to the human judgment and produced the "proper effects," that is, "a suitable and exemplary conduct." Christianity was practically a system of morality based on right reason.

The Socinians might be put down by force, but the leaven was working. When Hugo Grotius, the great Dutch jurist, attempted to vindicate the Protestant view of the atonement against them, he failed to hold to the strict orthodox teaching and himself fell back on a system of natural human law found in the laws of nations; he made that the basis of a theory of atonement, which he represented as a manifestation of rectoral or governmental justice, that is, such a kind of justice as appeals to the moral reason of humanity. Almost a generation before him, James Arminius, the famous theologian of Amsterdam, made his plea for a milder view of predestination in order to secure recognition of the worth of the human will and its freedom. The spirit was infectious. Other Dutch thinkers tried to mediate between opposing schools of theology by seeking to formulate the views held by Christians in common as the essential

Christian doctrines, all else being secondary. But how was this to be settled unless by the judgment of man? And this amounted to only an inkling of what was coming. Orthodoxy soon found itself fighting for its life, not against protests here or there, but against a great body of thought that seemed, at least, to be scientifically and philosophically grounded.

There were two great parallel movements of thought that held the attention of Europe for the greater part of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The one was inaugurated in England by Bacon and Locke and culminated in the philosophic skepticism of Hume on the one hand and the philosophic faith of Butler on the other hand. The other movement was inaugurated on the Continent by Descartes and, passing through the crucible of Kant's *Critique*, issued in the Hegelian logic. The one was animated by the spirit of critical inquiry, the other by the spirit of speculation. Both were grounded in the Protestant confidence in the power of the human mind to know reality.

Bacon and Locke were most deeply concerned with moral and religious aims, and attempted the discovery of the relations between God, man, and nature, in order to the fulfilment of the duties of life. With this end in view both sought to formulate a method of knowledge —the one by allowing external nature to speak to the human mind through her facts independently of all philosophical presuppositions or personal preferences, the other by a similar observation of the facts of inner experience. Both inaugurated movements that have continued to the present, and both arrived at a natural theology and sought to retain their traditional respect

for revealed Christianity by maintaining a distinction between natural theology and supernatural theology, or revelation. But the followers of both carried their principles to conclusions that would have alarmed them. Men ever seek a unitary foundation for their faith and choose that which impresses them the most.

The great achievements of Sir Isaac Newton in his scientific study of the laws of nature gave an immense impetus to the desire to wrest from the objective universe a disclosure of the character of that Being from whose hand she came and of the relation in which he has willed that man should stand to himself. Such a doctrine would constitute a religion trustworthy, dignified, and permanent, in contrast with the vagaries, superstitions, and absurdities so characteristic of traditional faiths. Such a religion could not be dependent on those external and extraordinary occurrences which men call miracles or special revelations, or, if men still held to such special revelations, these must be brought into conformity with nature's universal "revelation." This religion of nature comes to noble utterance in Addison's great hymn, the first and last stanzas of which are here quoted:

> The spacious firmament on high
> With all the blue ethereal sky
> And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
> Their great Original proclaim.
>
> In reason's ear they all rejoice
> And utter forth a glorious voice,
> Forever singing, as they shine,
> "The hand that made us is divine."

Locke made out by his method of psychical introspection that the whole body of our knowledge arises

from sensation and reflection and by the combinations we make of the ideas received in this way, and that it is not in any degree dependent on the falsely imagined "innate ideas" that are not subject to test or proof. The result is on the one hand the dependence of the mind for its ideas of God upon the impressions which the external world makes on our senses, and on the other hand a logical repudiation of miracles and reputed special revelations. The canons of the rational intelligence again become the touchstone of all professed revelations. Like Bacon, he sought to guard his followers against a rejection of Christianity by distinguishing between reason and faith. The former gives rational, fundamental truths; the latter supplies super-rational truths to be received by faith. He regarded Christianity as embracing truths of the latter kind and wrote a work entitled *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures;* but his "Christianity" was an original, simple, rational faith whose revelations stood the test of reason. I quote his own words setting forth his views of the relation of this revelation to reason:

> Reason is natural revelation, whereby the eternal Father of light and Fountain of all knowledge communicates to all mankind that portion of truth which he has laid within reach of their natural faculties; revelation is natural reason enlarged by a new set of discoveries communicated by God immediately, which reason vouches the truth of, by the testimony and proofs it gives that they come from God.

The principles of Bacon and Locke carried the majority of religious thinkers along with them. But a cleavage soon appeared. On the one side were those who sought to carry these principles to the logical conclusion by a rejection of all special revelation, and on the other side

were those whose affection for the traditional faith led them to try to maintain, with Bacon and Locke, a faith in special revelation as seen in certain Christian doctrines. Both believed in the primacy of natural theology or rational religion, and both, for a time at least, claimed to be Christian; but they differed as to the *quantum* of doctrine that is to be regarded as fundamentally Christian. The one side naturally attacked the miracles and the other side defended them as the stronghold of orthodoxy. The story of the progress of the criticism of the Christian Scripture need not delay us here. The stress of controversy drove the first class (who came to be known as Deists) toward a rejection of all belief in a religion of fellowship with God, while it drove the others to acknowledge, as Butler did, that Christianity is "a republication of the religion of nature," necessitated through the darkness caused by sin, *plus* certain other doctrines which were necessary in order to meet the needs of sinners. Both were rationalists at heart.

The parallel movement on the Continent began with Descartes' *Cogito, ergo sum.* Proceeding by eliminating, first of all, everything that could be doubted, he found at last a limit to the possibility of doubt in the very laws of thought. Then he proceeded to find in thought the determination of the laws of real existence. That which is necessary to thought necessarily *is.* Arguing from the necessary connection between cause and effect, he posited God as the ultimate and only real cause or substance. From this substance flow the secondary substances of mind and body or thought and matter, whose phenomena correspond to each other. This makes our knowledge real. Spinoza carried Descartes' position

farther and by the same necessity of thought predicated the one only, infinite, self-existent substance, which is God. By immanent necessity it expresses itself in two secondary substances, thought and extension, which are only two out of the infinite number of the divine attributes. Finite things are only temporary modes of the divine self-expression, and by the same necessity by which they flow from God they return to God again. The whole world becomes the expression of the divine perfection or goodness. When Hegel at a much later date sought to unfold a philosophy of religion, of history, and of all existence by the immanent necessity of thought, he was repeating Spinoza's achievement, though in a different way. He was developing the premises of rationalism to their inevitable conclusion. The whole of religion is dominated by the authority of the Idea. The Christian verities are transmuted into a system of logical concepts evolved by the inner necessity of thought.

Between these two great thinkers there occurred a large number of less pretentious efforts to reduce the truths of the Christian religion to the terms of clear thinking. It was hoped to vindicate belief in the chief Christian doctrines by expounding them in the terms of the popular philosophy. It was the age of the Enlightenment. Clearness is the test and certificate of truth. Obscurity, confusion, is falsehood or error. All in Christianity that did not correspond with the current doctrine of the world was explained away or regarded as not essentially Christian. The Scriptures were subjected to a criticism like that which was in vogue in England. Revelation was identical in its essence with the

impartation of true knowledge. The language of Lessing in his *Education of the Human Race* is pertinent here:

> That which is education as respects the individual is revelation as respects the race. Education is revelation imparted to the individual and revelation is education which has been and is still being imparted to the human race. Education gives the man nothing which he could not also have of himself; only it gives more quickly and more easily that which he could have of himself. Similarly, revelation gives the human race nothing whereunto human reason, if left to itself, could not also attain, but gave and gives to it the most important of these things, only earlier.

The rationalism of the Continent agreed with the rationalism of England in reducing the essential doctrines of Christianity to the outlines of a "natural religion" or "rational theology." As the Deists of England made Christianity equivalent to a belief in the existence of a supreme rational Being whose will man must obey, the terms of a moral law in accord with "nature," with its rewards and punishments, and the certainty of a future life, so Kant enunciated for Continental rationalism the doctrines of essential religion (Christianity) to which all other doctrines of religion are reducible. They are the three great postulates of the practical reason: God, freedom, and immortality.

Briefly, then, the position of modern Christian rationalism may be stated as follows: It is built upon the foundations of the orthodox Protestant apologetics. Christianity is to be believed because it is true. Its truth is its doctrines. Doctrines are products of thought. All true thinking corresponds with the laws of the universe, which have the same source. Those doctrines of religion are alone true that are consistent with the truths of reason or right thinking. The illogical is the false.

True Christianity, then, is identical with a rational faith. All those features of traditional Christianity which conflict with nature's laws are only adventitious and are to be set aside as nonessential. All the duties which a true Christianity enjoins are such duties as arise from a rational interpretation of man's relation to the laws of nature which are the laws of God—Christianity is natural morality. The great edifice of traditional dogmas, sacraments, and institutions crumbles, and instead we have the simple faith that holds the existence of an infinite God, the eternal validity of the moral law, reward and punishment for obedience, and a life beyond the grave where these are given.

3. A BRIEF ESTIMATE OF CHRISTIAN RATIONALISM

We shall first estimate it in relation to the rival interpretations of Christianity already expounded.

1. As against Apocalypticism: While Apocalypticism is highly emotional and appeals strongly to the imagination of the common man with its preference for the picturesque and the tragical, rationalism is reflective, eschews the extraordinary and the inexplicable, and tends to reduce everything to the level of the common and the orderly. Apocalypticism makes much of inspiration and revelation, while rationalism holds to the superior value of the normal action of intelligence and "reason." Apocalypticism appeals to the supernatural as the extra- and even the contra-natural; rationalism regards the natural as the fundamental and the true. Apocalypticism is pessimistic as to the physical universe and the ordinary course of human affairs, but rationalism is optimistic in regard to nature and exalts the value of

natural morality as against a derogatory view of the natural man. Apocalypticism represents the faith of the downtrodden, the suffering, the baffled and beaten ones of our world whose only hope for victory over opposing powers lies in the intervention of almighty God; it is an application of this hope to the Christian faith in Jesus; but rationalism is the faith of those who have found the world a comfortable place to live in.

2. As against Catholicism: While Catholicism is institutional, proclaims a universal external order, and rests its faith on official authority, rationalism is individualistic, tends to liberate men from institutional control, and is wanting in the power to create a firm bond of community life. While Catholicism, as respects its inner life, is emotional, loves the sensuous, the mysterious, and the symbolical, but is intellectually indifferent, rationalism is intellectual, plain, and matter-of-fact, and loves knowledge for its own sake. While the morality of Catholicism is ascetical, the morality of rationalism consists in loyalty to the dictates of the common conscience—the morality of "common sense." In short, while Catholic Christianity is a religion of devotion to visions of another world beyond the present, rationalistic Christianity is devoted to the task of making the present world better.

3. As against mysticism: While both mysticism and rationalism seek for the simple essence of the Christian faith and endeavor to eliminate all adventitious forms or foreign accretions from whatever source, they are to be contrasted in that mysticism seeks its end in the realm of feeling, but rationalism in the realm of thought. Mysticism is receptive, almost passive, finds its good

by the way of contemplation, and discovers the One and All by abandonment of the many; rationalism is intellectually active, inquisitive, analytical in temper, and finds the solution of its problems in a scientific study of the many. Mysticism is an aristocratic faith, while rationalism is, professedly at least, democratic. Mysticism tends toward a pessimistic view of the prospects of the human multitudes, rationalism toward an optimistic view.

4. As against Protestantism: Rationalism is Protestantism disrobed of its confidence in the accuracy of those marvelous traditions in which it trusted to have found its life. It is Protestantism shorn of its elaborate scheme of doctrines in exposition of a theory of divine government. It is Protestant intelligence, self-conscious, clear, and acute, disconnected with the yearning of Protestantism for a deeper sense of what it loved to call the grace of God and its sense of the value of a human soul. It is Protestant doctrinalism without the Protestant devout feeling of being the subject of a divine revelation. At the same time rationalism is Protestantism become intensely conscientious as respects its intellectual processes, made more sympathetic toward all seekers of truth, and made more fully aware that the world in which it lives here and now is a well-ordered and beneficent world. It is Protestantism freed from that dread of science which was the baneful inheritance received from Catholicism.

In the next place, rationalism is to be judged in its own right apart from these other types of professed Christianity. A few suggestions only can be offered in this article. Rationalism has the merit of insisting that

the universe is a unit—this world and the next, earth and heaven, are inseparable and are governed by the same laws. The truly moral life is truly natural to man, and the most truly natural is the only supernatural. The whole universe is as sacred as any part of it. Religion and morality are ultimately one. The universe is a field of moral discipline, and science is a product of the moral imperative. If Christianity is true, it must be true to the universe.

But rationalism as a type of Christian theory is dependent on those historical forms of Christianity which it criticizes. It is critical rather than creative. It bases its interpretation of Christianity on assumptions derived from speculation and not from the Christian traditions. Hence these traditions are a problem rather than a source of comfort. Rationalism is accurate in aim, but is cold and forbidding to the tempted and tried. It may be free from hallucinations, but it lacks inspiration. It may be free from fanaticism, but it is lacking in the spirit of religious enterprise. While it seeks to satisfy the demands of intelligence it cannot arouse deep emotion or enthusiasm in the masses. It is ultimately aristocratic.

CHAPTER VI

EVANGELICISM OR MODERNIZED PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY

The term "evangelicism" is here used to designate the character of a development of the Christian religion which is distinctly modern but which has roots reaching far back into the past. It is not meant thereby that a new religious denomination has arisen or that even a new school of thought deserves a name for itself. We do not seem to be suffering particularly from a dearth of organizations or new theories. But recent times have witnessed the emergence of a new type of Christian life and thought which seems to be so charged with a message of good to the world that a term which carries with it the idea of loyalty to such a message may be fitly applied to it. The aim of the present article is to trace the influences formative of it and to indicate its main features.

1. SOME CONSTRUCTIVE RELIGIOUS FORCES IN MODERN CHRISTIANITY

The period of the ecclesiastico-political revolution we call the Protestant Reformation virtually came to a close with the execution of King Charles the First of England and the signing of the Peace of Westphalia about two hundred and seventy years ago. With the cessation of the "wars of religion" and the reaction against intolerance and violence, there ensued a period of indifference and general skepticism lasting about a century

more. Notwithstanding the fact that there were fertile oases here and there amid the general dearth, religious faith suffered from widespread sterility. Then, suddenly and unexpectedly, there came a change. The principal factors contributing to it are worthy of special mention.

First in the order of merit is the eighteenth-century religious revival in America and Britain. In those trying days, when men were shaking themselves clear of the external forms of ritual or order or doctrine which earlier ages had supposed to be necessary to salvation, there were many faithful men who labored in quiet and obscurity to keep the smoldering fire of faith from going out. To them must be traced the revival of the consciousness of an indisputable personal participation in the higher moral and religious life apart from outward forms, but it was not until men like Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, and John Wesley brought to it the needed zeal, intelligence, and skill united that it burst into a fiery flame. There came an outbreak of religious feeling that defied the intellectual canons of rationalism and of orthodoxy alike and swept on through the whole Anglo-Saxon world with irresistible force. As all great revivals, it gained its first impetus by winning the hearts of the working people, the poor, the neglected, and the defeated, but, despite scoffing and ridicule, it gradually conquered the respect of the prosperous and intelligent. Instead of wasting away in emotionalism, the revival, under the statesmanlike leadership of Wesley and his faithful coadjutors in various communions, kept adding to its initial impulse and became a permanent force of great importance in modern Protestantism. Since those earlier days of revivalism there have been considerable

intervals of dearth, and sometimes it has degenerated into selfish professionalism or hypocritical sentimentalism, but the yearning for the conversion of men from their sins and the effort to better their whole condition by the ministries of religion continue unabated.

The revival was characterized by the union of deep feeling with moral resolution. There was a return of Puritanism on its moral side. The danger of fanaticism was balanced by the insistence on inner and outer purity of life. For the "judicial righteousness" of earlier Calvinism was substituted the actual righteousness of positive personal goodness. If the preachers in their denunciation of sins condemned sometimes the innocent with the guilty, they succeeded at least in rousing the consciences of men to action and doomed to death the antinomianism that had been eating out the heart of orthodoxy. Personal purity was a demand for the present life and was not to be postponed to the day of the soul's separation from the body. This is probably the import of John Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection or perfect love in this life. The Christian salvation was to be a present reality, the conscious possession of an enlightened heart.

The spirit of philanthropy was quickened and broadened. The great public wrongs under which men were suffering began to call loudly for remedy. John Howard's crusade on behalf of the prisoners in the jails of Europe, efforts for the improvement of the criminal law in the direction of equity and humanity in penalties, the extinction of the slave trade, intervention on behalf of the "factory hands," the fight against the evils of strong drink, were all in part fruits of the revival. Not-

withstanding the emphasis placed on the hope of heaven, men were evidently learning the worth of the earthly life as the sphere for the realization of the heavenly. A Protestant principle that had been half forgotten in the controversies and persecutions of earlier days was coming to vigorous renewal, namely, the unspeakable worth of the man.

The progress of the revival was sustained throughout by the conviction that religion has its home in the soul of the individual. Its value and its truth are self-attesting, for God speaks to man directly. This was but a renewal of the Protestant view expressed in the oft-quoted affirmation of Calvin that the truth of God's word was certified to men by "the secret testimony of the Spirit." Only it was universalized. Every man was competent to enjoy this immediate certainty. The center of gravity in religion was shifted from objective facts, doctrines, or rites to the inner life—faith. Experience is the ultimate fact in the life of religion. Men who had "the witness of the Spirit" that they were forgiven, renewed, saved, possessed a basis of certainty that made the Calvinist doctrines of election and predestination unnecessary for many people and even a stumbling-block to the free personal faith of others. For when the common man gains a "heart conviction" of the favor of God, he becomes independent of the artificial supports of fixed systems of any kind and resents their interference with his liberty.

The tide of feeling swept over ecclesiastical and doctrinal bounds. In the long run it mattered little that John Wesley, a faithful priest of the Church of England, strove to keep his "societies" within the order

established by law. His followers swung loose and organized the various Methodist "churches." It mattered little that he and Whitefield, with their followers, split on issues between Calvinists and Arminians. For both sides shared alike in the movement of grace, and after a time it became plain that the controversies between them were mostly side issues. All existing Protestant bodies shared the blessing, and new denominations of Christians were constantly arising as the movement spread. Many of these bodies have had a fairly fabulous growth. Hence, while the leaders and their followers professed conservative views, on the whole, in matters of theology, an era of ecclesiastical and theological freedom was being unconsciously ushered in and a stimulus given to reconstruction along all lines of life and thought.

Equally significant of the new freedom was the spontaneous outburst of Christian song. The Christian church has reason to be proud of its hymnody in almost all the periods of its history, despite much doggerel. There were noble Protestant hymnists in the days preceding the revival. But the ritual of the Church of England, being stereotyped, was a sedative rather than an inspiration of religious action, and the public services of Nonconformists and Presbyterians both in America and in Britain were rather barren on the liturgical side. There was even controversy over the propriety of using "uninspired" productions in worship. Now all was changed. The new faith was sung into the hearts of the multitudes. The era of modern hymnody and religious music was ushered in. Charles Wesley alone composed over six thousand hymns. There were many other sweet

singers in those days, though none so prolific as he. Most of these hymns have disappeared, but many remain as a permanent asset of the Christian faith. The religious fruitage remains even after the hymns perish. Revivals of religion are always marked now by the presence of the singing evangelist. The new faith is strongly emotional everywhere. The range of emotions has widened, while the expression is more restrained. The main point in this connection is that the emphasis has been shifted from the forms of order or of doctrines to the feelings, and the theology that would expound the new faith must take cognizance of the change.

The reawakening of the spirit of love for all men issued in the birth of the modern Protestant foreign missionary movement. When the far vision of William Carey gave to the churches the inspiration for ambitions and undertakings undreamed of before, the pent-up energies of Protestant religion, hitherto confined to narrow bits of territory, comparatively speaking, and barely holding its own against Catholicism in the long struggle for existence, were released from their bonds and developed enterprises whose story reads like a fairy tale, so wonderful was their success. Christianity has truly become a world-religion. Its frontiers are now in every land. The work was urged at first as a means of rescuing men universally from guilt and condemnation, but it has now become an attempt to build the Christian faith into the social, industrial, and civil fabric of the life of the peoples. The variety and magnitude of the labors involved, the new acquaintance with the multitudinous faiths of mankind, the necessity of interpreting the Christian faith in the presence of these faiths, the

inevitable co-operation of Christians who in the homeland belonged to rival churches, and the association of the missionary with the work of the statesman and the man of commerce have produced a reaction upon the quality of the religious life of the churches at home and have forced upon them the task of reinterpreting their faith to themselves. A new consciousness of the inherent universality of the Christian faith and a new sense of the reality of the inner communion of all Christians are among the beneficent results. The doctrinal outcome will be referred to later.

The increase of general intelligence in Protestant Christendom is equally noteworthy. The astounding educational advance of modern times is directly traceable to religious impulses. The evangelist is followed by the teacher. The missionary becomes an educationalist. The great systems of public schools, high schools, colleges, and universities, of which modern states are so justly proud, have mostly grown up from the voluntary schools founded by religious men and maintained by private funds in pursuance of the purpose to promote the spiritual good of the young. Although it may be true that in many cases the original founders of these schools were seeking particularly to guard the young believing mind from the assaults of a secularized intellect, nevertheless the evidence remains clear that with the modern Protestant the religious life cannot be truly fostered except by the increase of intelligence. Moreover, in addition to the schools of Christendom there is the tremendous educational influence of the press. The unlimited circulation of newspapers and periodicals of all kinds and the prodigious output of

books, taken in conjunction with the free intermingling of millions of men by means of wide travel and the use of the telegraph and telephone, have produced a sense of the dignity and power of the human spirit and a consciousness of human solidarity scarcely dreamed of before. The religious life of such a people must be vastly different in its content and utterance from any earlier type. There is a modernized Protestant Christianity. The modern evangel has obtained a wider range of appeal and an increase of power to impress its convictions on men. It has appropriated the language of modern culture and has gained a broader outlook. All the pursuits of intelligence are now reckoned within the pale of the religious life. Christians are conscious of a larger vocation. In order that this vocation may be fulfilled a reinterpretation of Christianity is demanded.

2. SOME SECULAR FORCES CONTRIBUTING TO THE FORMATION OF A NEW TYPE OF CHRISTIANITY

It is not to be supposed for a moment that the religious life of our times takes its character wholly from those influences which are ordinarily acknowledged as religious. For the religious life of any people at any period of time is constituted by the whole complex of forces which, in their unity, go to make up the character of the people in question. Everything about them heads up in their religion. This is seen particularly in Protestant life. For Protestantism, by breaking away from the ideals of the cloister and sallying forth to the task of mastering and sanctifying the natural, exposed itself from the very first to the molding influence of industry and trade as well as to the currents of social and political life.

It is surely a significant thing that the intensification and expansion of the religious life of Protestantism in the last century and a half is fairly paralleled by a similar growth in the production and exchange of material wealth. The spirit of enterprise inherent in Protestantism, which had suffered a check through the internal strifes of Europe, reawoke at the very time when "the Spirit of the Lord began to move mightily" upon John Wesley and George Whitefield. Beginning in the eighteenth century and continuing through the nineteenth, there was an economic awakening like that which occurred when mediaeval Europe was roused from her intellectual sloth, her moral coarseness, and her religious passivity. Only, the new change was on a tremendous scale. Mechanical invention has produced a revolution in nearly all human industries. Production, manufacture, and transportation proceed on a scale impossible to imagine one hundred and fifty years ago. The factory and not the home is now the seat of industry. The town has been robbing the country of its peasantry. New vast centers of population have been created. Cities number their inhabitants by the hundreds of thousands and by the millions. New sources of wealth have been sought out and forces long concealed from human ken have been recruited for man's service. Lands far separated geographically have realized a close community of interest. Railroads have made them neighbors. Great ships of high speed in ever-growing numbers plow the seas. The production of wealth has become fabulous, and its exchange is now so complicated that only the few understand its processes. Geographical boundaries and national distinctions have been mostly overcome

for the purposes of trade. Steam, steel, and electricity have belted far-separated communities together as one vast industrial body. The problems of adjustment which in consequence confront the economist, the statesman, and the moralist are simply appalling. Not less serious are the problems which confront the religious thinker, as we shall see.

Be it noted that the Protestant nations have been the leaders in these enterprises. Where Protestant religion enters, there too comes material prosperity and comfort. It is surely a far cry from the natural poverty of the primitive Christian and his longing for the Lord's return, as well as from the voluntary poverty of the mediaeval saint and his longing for heaven, to the acquisition of incalculable wealth by modern Protestant Christians and their devotion of it to the enterprises of religious faith. There seems to be a natural association between Protestant religion and Protestant industry. The concurrence of the two revivals in time and space implies their dependence upon a common impulse. Surely some new sense of freedom, of initiative, of creative power, had come to men and was manifesting its character in the parallel conquests of things material and things spiritual. That it was so in the spiritual realm we have already seen. It was the same in the realm of physical industry, we must conclude, if we rely on the enunciation of its controlling principle by Adam Smith in his famous *Wealth of Nations*. He says: "The patrimony of a poor man lies in the strength and dexterity of his hands, and to hinder him from employing this strength and dexterity in what manner he thinks proper, without injury to his neighbor, is a plain violation of this most sacred property.

It is a manifest encroachment upon the just liberty of both the workman and of those who might be disposed to employ him." If we change the reference in these words from man's outer powers to his inner powers and the application from external acts to inward acts, we detect the inner harmony between Protestant industrialism and Protestant religion. We shall see, however, that neither is an instance of pure individualism.

Far more significant than the mere creation and accumulation of wealth or the new distribution and grouping of population, with the accompanying social changes, is the manner (alluded to above) in which the activities and interests of all the peoples concerned have become interlocked. An economic disturbance in one quarter of the world is rapidly transmitted to almost every part of it. A feeling of economic interdependence pervades the world, overriding hostile tariffs and other artificial restrictions. Economic insularity is becoming a thing of the past. The industries of the world are more than competitive; they are complementary. There is an increasing sensitiveness with regard to business happenings everywhere. The time seems near when the many economic kingdoms of the world shall become one kingdom.

Changes in the political realm during the period under review have been equally startling, and their bearing on the religious life of men is important. It has been a time of political revolution, partly peaceful and partly violent. In this the Anglo-Saxon and French peoples have been the leaders. The democratic self-affirmation that broke out in the American Revolution and culminated in the founding of the republic of the

United States was just the revival and reinforcement of the ancient British contention that the people must be self-governing. It reawoke in the mother-country the conviction of the supreme worth of this principle and the determination to enforce it. The loss of a portion of the British Empire was followed by a wonderful extension of it in other directions, and with this extension of political power went a gradual extension of democratic self-government to more than four hundred millions of people. The revolutionary spirit that wrought successfully in America spread to France and roused that magnificent though long-suffering people to the consciousness of powers and rights that had smoldered for generations. With the watchwords "Liberty, equality, fraternity" upon their lips the French people pressed on toward the fondly cherished task of bringing all nations to share in their own newly discovered destiny. The outcome was seen in the turmoils that came to a climax in the Napoleonic wars. Though a powerful reaction followed, it was not permanent except in a few quarters. The nineteenth century was pre-eminently revolutionary in politics. There were repeated revolutions in France, culminating in the firm establishment of the Republic. Spanish and Portuguese colonies revolted and succeeded in forming independent governments, mostly republican. Revolution in the Italian peninsula issued in a truly national government. A peaceable revolution was accomplished in Britain by the passing of electoral reform bills, emancipation acts, and the repeal of the Corn Laws. Minor revolutions occurred elsewhere. Attempted revolutions in Spain, Poland, Prussia, and Russia mostly failed because of the want of deep popular

conviction or because of the supremacy of the military power. Almost with the turn of the twentieth century the ancient Manchu dynasty was overthrown and a republic was formed in China. At the very moment of my writing there comes over the wires and through the air the news of an internal struggle in mighty Russia that may pave the way for democracy. Similar changes elsewhere seem impending.

A profound spiritual significance in these changes is further suggested by the intimacy of their connection with the achievements of scientific investigation. Were one to confine his attention to the progress of "natural science" alone, the result would be sufficiently impressive. The man of science, armed with a splendid technique, has been reconquering old realms and conquering realms hitherto unknown. Scientific research has been prolific not only in discovery but also in the creation of new problems for the thinker. Consider a single pertinent fact in this connection—the dependence of modern industrialism and modern civil government upon the labors of science. Agriculture, manufacture, building, and transportation look for guidance to the scientific laboratory where, unseen by the great world around him, the explorer of nature's secrets makes his discoveries of the dark continents of reality which others are to exploit for human good. In that same quiet chamber also are being forged implements of government by which the citizens of a nation are enabled to live and move together and the different nations to work out their fearful problems in alliance or opposition. In the present war the issues are as much determined by the man who holds the weapons of scientific experiment as

by the soldier who wields the weapons which these other weapons have made.

When the religious thinker contemplates these recent developments, he is likely to be impressed with the following:

In the first place, these different tides of influence have been synchronous, concurrent, and operative upon the life of about the same peoples. The awakening of the religious consciousness, the commitment to new religious and ecclesiastical enterprise, the uprising of the Christian intelligence, the growing mastery of the secrets of nature and the control and utilization of her forces for man's purposes, the progress of democratic revolution in political and civil life, the weaving of the web of international relations from which no civilized nation can extricate itself—these constitute a great mass movement that seems to operate in obedience to a new consciousness of the meaning of human life and to a new interpretation of its destiny.

In the second place, there is manifest in all this the power of individual personal initiative. Conventional beliefs, social customs, industrial methods, political establishments, have all been challenged by daring reformers and innovators. The experimenter, the speculator, the discoverer, the inventor, and the creator have done new things, and the world has been following, sometimes "afar off," and trying to appropriate the results. No matter how fast society seeks to institutionalize and force the individual's activity into regular grooves, he breaks away and pushes on still faster. He cannot perish. There never was such another age of individualism as the present.

In the third place, by this very development of the free individual personality the true universality of man has come to light. The breaking of the old bonds of union among men has led the way to a higher unity. This is attained by the normal unfolding of his powers in their unity and not by the method of artificial restraint. The consciousness of the essential inner unity of all mankind, of the facts and forces of nature, and of man and nature—even though the character of this latter unity may be indefinable as yet—is gradually forcing itself upon the human spirit. Thus by the common progress of men under a guidance, higher, let us believe, than the human, a fundamental principle of the Reformation is finding recognition: namely, life is a unit, the separation of the secular activity of man from the holy is being annulled, heaven and earth are coming together, the world in which we live is our Father's house of "many mansions."

If, therefore, all these various regions of human experience belong to one another and if in their unity they constitute the proper sphere of religion; then, if the Christian faith is to permeate them all with its spirit, if it is destined to become the universal faith, this must be because it reveals the ultimate meaning of them all. A new attempt at an interpretation of its meaning becomes indispensable to the believer.

3. THE INFLUENCE OF RECENT ATTEMPTS TO UNDERSTAND CHRISTIANITY

Of late the Christian spirit has been diligently working upon a new interpretation of itself. If the positions assumed in the foregoing statements be tenable, then the imperativeness of restating the Christian faith can

be escaped only by him who abandons its hope of universal dominion. For, indeed, it is in obedience to the high demands of the faith itself that men have been exploring and mapping out afresh the territory it has covered in its course.

A reinterpretation of the faith has been sought through a historical recapitulation of its progress in time and space. The birth of the historical spirit came late in Christian circles. Until quite recently the history of Christianity was studied mainly for apologetical or polemical purposes. Catholics supported the claims of their church by referring to an unbroken historical succession. Protestants sought to prove that Catholicism was a pagan corruption of the true faith by comparing it with the early Christianity. Later on, the Deists sought to establish a similar charge against orthodox Protestantism. Orthodox apologists like Lardner replied with evidence corroborative of the historicity of biblical accounts. The work of the historical criticism of biblical documents was soon under way. At last a direct interest in the history of Christianity was aroused. It shared in the spirit of scientific exploration referred to above. The Christian historian came under the sway of the scientific conscience for facts. The apologetical and polemical interest began to give place to the love of truth. By unmeasured diligence and patience the long story has been gradually unfolded. The perspective of nineteen centuries and the broad horizon of present world-knowledge have combined to produce certain overwhelming convictions.

To begin with, the Christian religion, whatever be its source or its ultimate explanation, is a distinctive

spiritual force in the world of men, increasing in momentum from age to age, permeating more and more the self-conscious life, the social relations, the political institutions, and the industrial enterprises of the people who come under its influence. It seems destined to dominate the world. In the successive stages of its career it has produced or assumed many forms of expression—discourses, prophecies, hymns, churches, schools, types of architecture, forms of ritual or liturgy, and bodies of doctrine. Each one of these seemed at some time essential to it, but they have all been under constant process of change. They pass, but it survives. It is greater than any or all of its creations—greater than the Bible, the churches, and the creeds. Its value lies in itself and not in something that is a means to its progress. Its truth lies in its own inherent power and not in its conformity to some standard outside of it. Not less wonderful than its many changing forms is the constancy of its character. For, notwithstanding the disharmonies and perversions that have arisen in its course, it has ever tended to turn the minds of men trustfully to an Unseen from whom they came and to whom they go, a heavenly Father; it has spurred them on hopefully to a personal ideal that ever beckons them on to the better life and, though itself always in advance of them, is very real to them because it fulfils itself daily in them; it has inspired them with undying courage and strength because it has made them conscious of a Power dwelling in their hearts and ever filling their lives with greater worth. It has therefore thrown itself freely into the great enterprises of men and has stimulated them constantly to new enterprise. It has thereby pushed the race on to higher achievement.

In all this it has borne a distinctive character. It has made men aware that the greatest thing about them is their inner life—in this lies the clue to all that is worthful, the bond that unites men to one another and that brings them to fellowship with God. It has always purified that life, removing the selfishness, the cowardice, the malice, and the lust. It is communion-forming. It has united men in mutual love and esteem, it has purified their intercourse from immorality, it has bound their wills together in the pursuit of ends which could never be attained without this pure love. It has filled them with the determination to unite all men finally in a common holy destiny, and teaches them never to give one another up, never to despair of men. None can be spared. Hence the labors expended so freely in behalf of the ignorant and the fallen. Its course is marked by works of mercy.

The historical view of Christianity has had a liberating and elevating influence on those who have participated in it. While it inculcates reverence for churches and creeds as forms in which the Christian spirit clothes itself, it teaches men to regard all these as only temporary. They are helps for a time but not authorities, good servants but bad masters. By looking backward men learn that their ideal is before, and not behind, them. Historical study has helped to create what I have here called evangelicism, the gospel of history, the message of the ultimate attainment of the Christian good.

Or, in the next place, we may turn to the recent study of the character and career of Jesus Christ. This is a special instance, in part, of the influence of historical study, but on account of its cardinal relation to our faith

it is deserving of a separate consideration. It is not very long since the cry, "Back to Christ," began to be heard in Protestant circles after a long silence. It arose partly out of the feeling that traditional Christianity had wandered far from the spirit of its founder, and out of the desire to recover its original purity and simplicity. The motive was practical rather than theoretical—the desire to live the true Christian life rather than the wish to construct a new Christian dogma. The hope was to find in the story of Jesus and in the record of his teachings the needed guidance and strength for the moral and religious life. Ecclesiastical strifes, doctrinal differences, metaphysical problems, were to be left aside and the character of his personality recovered. Men were to have a direct view of his way of life, his aims and hopes and ambitions, his estimate of men and his treatment of them, his outlook upon the world, and his heart-relation to God. They were even to live through his inner experiences. The motive was pure.

The outcome is rich in every way, but also surprising. For the religious purpose has been strengthened by the same scientific interest that operated so powerfully in the historical study of the Christian religion. The task has proved unexpectedly difficult. The labor expended has been prodigious, and the spirit and method of the study, on the whole, worthy of the subject. It became evident soon that there was much more to do than to construct a new "harmony of the Gospels," or to arrange Jesus' teachings in an orderly manner. The world of men and things in which he lived, the concrete circumstances that called forth his deeds and words, the traditions and other influences from the distant past that

entered into his soul, had to be restored. Above all, the student could not solve his problem without seeking to reproduce in his own soul the very heart-life of Jesus. Even this was insufficient. For it was as truly impossible to know him apart from the impressions he made on other people as it is impossible to estimate the character of any other man apart from the reflection of it in those who came under his influence. Indeed, we have no representation of his words and deeds that was given independently of the manner in which others felt about him.

We are here concerned particularly with the results for the Christian life. What are the most important of them? Summarily, first of all is the assurance that a human life possessed of the beauty and the strength, the meekness and the majesty, the tenderness and the sternness, the patience and determination, and all the other qualities that stand out in the picture of the evangelists was really lived in such a world and at such a time as that. The unspeakable comfort is ours that such a life can be lived, it is thoroughly human, it may be ours. An immense inspiration comes to make that life our own and to live it by faith in the same God. Then, too, we see that this life of his in its inner qualities is transmissible and has really been transmitted to others. It has flowed out into human life at large. It has become a permanent asset of the race. The more men familiarize themselves with the image of his personality reflected in the narratives and in the religious life that has been propagated from him as its source the more his name comes to stand for the whole content of what is good for men and for the whole aim of their being. He has

become the great companion of men. They feel that he is living with them all the time. His spirit goes out conquering and to conquer. This is the faith he has produced in them, and this is his great achievement. Him, therefore, they follow. With him they live, with him they die, and with him they reign. This may not be formal logic, but it is faith, and he has given it to them as their inalienable possession. The emancipating outcome of the study has also been very great. Men who cannot understand the creeds, who feel that the profound metaphysical subtleties that have been draped about him are beyond their power to comprehend, and who have believed that their faith can be only second hand and dependent on authority have laid hold once more on the confidence that he is the friend of those who labor and are heavy laden and the meek and lowly may learn of him. A divine personality has triumphed once more over institutions and theories.

A third line of reflection that has powerfully contributed to the modernized Protestant Christianity is traceable in the renewed study of the inner life of the Christian soul. Until recently the subjective side of the Christian religion was scarcely regarded as affording the true basis for an understanding of its nature. The warmth of religious feeling in men has always tended to express itself with great freedom and confidence. Piety has often reveled in the joy and power of a new life in the soul. Mystics in all ages, like the born psychologists they are, have sought to trace in an orderly manner the working of the divine Spirit upon their own spirit in the hope of communicating, if possible, the great secret to others. But the very subjectivity of their represen-

tations, the extraordinary character of them, the common opinion that these men were the favored few—"saints" to whom were vouchsafed experiences denied to the common people—confirmed the tendency to repose the truth of Christianity on the external authority of miraculous events, or of the church, or of the Scriptures, or of the creeds, or of sacraments. The subjective experience of the Christian was conceived to be the result of receiving the objective realities.

But when the great revival referred to in the foregoing pages led to a reaffirmation of the worth of the religious experience, the way was opened to the work of reinterpreting the meaning of the Christian faith on the basis of that very subjective experience which had been so often disparaged. The great Schleiermacher led the way. The movement has grown to vast proportions. The psychology of the Christian religion has become a regular discipline in theological studies. Passing by the scientific product, the outcome for the Christian faith has been impressive.

For one thing, it has led Christians to perceive that their greatest possession is just the faith itself that has arisen in the soul. It is the man's inalienable wealth, and its power is inextinguishable. Even the inability to trace its source or to justify it intellectually is not fatal to it. It moves on in the soul and seems to have a logic of its own. Moreover, we have found that the experience is not merely subjective or purely individualistic. Its power of self-communication to others and its unifying power in communities of men are as impressive as its inner personal force. Then, too, it is discovered that religion of some kind is universal. Men

are not men without it. The way of approach to the votaries of other faiths is open. The Christian religion has points of contact with all other religions, and if it is destined to displace them, as we believe, that is because all that is truly worthful in them finds fulfilment in the Christian faith. This view carries with it everywhere a profound respect for religion. For the study of religions tends to confirm the Christian's confidence that his religious faith is that which more than anything else constitutes the character and the excellency of man's nature. The story of man becomes the history of his religion, or, putting it in another way, the religious faith of man is the wellspring of all his activities.

4. A CHARACTERIZATION OF EVANGELICISM

The quality of the modernized Protestantism which I have chosen to designate by this name can be easily anticipated from the foregoing description of the influences which have combined to produce it.

First of all, there is the point of its religious emphasis: The worth of personality is supreme. In every being that has the capacity to know that "this is I," whether it be the child whose self-consciousness is only inchoate or the perfect man whose soul is aware of its dignity in such a masterly manner that it proposes to subjugate a world to its authority; whether it be the crude and coarse savage barely able to defeat the animal within or without him in the battle of life, or the man whose soul is clean and tender and aware of its kinship with the Unseen, there is in every personality a sanctuary that may not be profaned by the foot of another without coming under a curse, a citadel from which he may repel

all invaders because in his inmost being he is united with the Father of all. Hence exist the reverence for childhood and the respect for its rights, the sacredness of human life and the effort to make the most of its potencies in all, the horror at the sight of cruelty and wanton slaughter of men, and the leaping of millions of men to arms to guard the community of men from danger. This is modern religion.

Thereby the tasks of life take on a new meaning. None of them is worthless and none of them is tried in vain. Whether it be the lowly toil of him who handles the pick and shovel, or the delicate and recondite search of the highly trained physicist, or the appalling issues confronting the statesman and the soldier, makes no difference. These tasks are religious. In the midst of them, and not by separation from them, will the man find his salvation. All men are equally called by the Most High, and all are to be estimated in terms of his worth.

The very material universe loses its hostile or indifferent character and becomes the sphere in which self-conscious personality may find fulfilment of its powers. The universe is friendly and will not crush us. From it there come to us constantly messages of hope and inspiration. There is an infinite Good Will at the heart of things and nothing shall by any means hurt us. For in it and through it there is a personality that answers to us when we cry, a Spirit in whom our spirit becomes aware of its destiny, a God whose fatherly purpose is revealed to us, his children. He will never leave us. Neither life nor death is a barrier to his fellowship with us. His very judgments draw us to him in lowly,

loving assurance of safety. For his purpose toward men is not double but single, and he will not be discouraged in its pursuit. If the God of the early Protestant was conceived mostly as the Judge-Ruler, the God of the modernized Protestant is mainly the Father-Ruler.

Not less striking is the religious estimate of Jesus Christ. He is more than a remote figure for whose physical return men long and wait in vain, more than a mysterious union of two incommensurable natures to be reverenced in a mystery, more than the sorrowful sufferer who has renounced all earthly goods, more than the penal sufferer who awakens our gratitude by his death but reserves his high prerogative to himself. He is that perfect personality who has sown himself into the life of our humanity in such a way that he can never be separated from the weakest or the worst of us, the great companion who carries us gladly into the very secret of his vicariousness and imparts it to us as our high privilege. No solitary grandeur is his. The prayer is never in vain:

> O Master, let me walk with thee
> In lowly paths of service free;
> Tell me thy secret.

In the answer to this prayer the modern man finds his salvation.

In the next place, the moral ideal is correspondingly elevated. In place of the attainment of an abstract righteousness or freedom from judicial guilt and the passive peace that was formerly supposed to issue from it there is the overmastering desire to attain to the life of ministry to men as the highest privilege of life. Personal worth is to be secured by unstinted self-giving to

others. The true renunciation is made by achievement. The true heaven of rest is found in perfect action. The truly unselfish life is found, not in retirement from the world, but in the free commitment of one's self to the work of making the material and spiritual forces of the universe instrumental to the purposes of personality and to the work of permeating the affairs of men in all the realms of action with a sense of the infinite worth of every person, so that men may be bound together in a communion of good-will. The man who smites with terrible blows the forces that rise in opposition to this ideal and who upholds with might the forces working in its favor is the true modern saint.

The whole man is involved in the pursuit of the ideal. Physical well-being and intellectual vigor have moral value. The material goods which serve the purpose of realizing the spiritual ideal are to be cherished and not despised. Intellectual pursuits are not a luxury, but a necessity of the moral career. The whole man in his unity must be saved, and that not by submission to a mysterious force from without, but by means of his own hearty self-commitment to his task. This concentrated activity is not in order to rest, but in order to the attainment of more perfect action.

As the whole man is sanctified, so the whole of the natural order of society is sanctified. Institutions, such as the family, the school, the business corporation, the state, are no longer purely secular, but take on the same holy character which has been ascribed to the church. They are modes of the progressive realization of that supreme moral ideal for which Jesus Christ gave himself —the Kingdom of God.

In the third place, there is an institutional interest in evangelicism. The interest of institutions lies in their instrumental value. Institutions of all kinds are to be tested by serviceability to human needs. Churches and their priests or ministers, their forms of organization and their liturgies, their sacred writings and their creeds, fall under the same rule as schools with their educational methods, civil states with their laws, and industrial orders with their processes of production and exchange—namely, the imperious demand that they minister to the creation of a community life in which the Christian ideal of perfect personality may find fulfilment. Without this, no matter how hoary their traditions or lofty their claims, they are *nehushtan*. Sanctity lies not in institutions or offices, but in the character of the man whose higher life they serve. These things do not come to us with authority from without, but they are created from within the man and have their authority there. Evangelicism is institutionally free. And thus, with its broad and deep interpretation of the relation of the Christian religion to the forms in which the spirit of the man has clothed itself in the past or may clothe itself in the future, it prepares us for the realization of the longed-for unity of all Christians and at last of all men.

Finally, there is the theological trend. The theology of evangelicism is yet to be written, for the most part. It would be impossible within our available space to indicate even in barest outline the contents of this theology. Only a word or two may be said about its general character. To begin with, the theological interest will be deep because theology is a part of that same spiritual life in men which is active in faith. As

this faith grows theology must advance. Then, too, the theology of evangelicism will be sensitive to all those other world-forces which we have enumerated as uniting to produce it, and it will attempt to give a religious explanation of them all. Moreover, it will have a distinctly practical aim. It will strive consciously to give to the believer the guidance he needs in performing his duty in the midst of those currents of power by which he finds himself surrounded. It will be the theology, not of the monk, but of the man of affairs. For this reason it will be free from bondage to all or any past forms of doctrine or to its own forms of doctrine, because all doctrine is ultimately dependent for its value on the faith it seeks to expound, and as faith grows doctrine must develop also. At the same time it will have a profound respect for the theology of the past because that theology was the expression of the religious faith of those times from which our own faith has been derived. Most of all, it will seek to be true to the Christian spirit by keeping in sympathy with the purpose of Jesus Christ and the purpose of God revealed in him, for therein it finds its inspiration and its support. The particular manner in which it will go to work to reconstruct the expression of the eternal realities of the Christian faith must be left for discussion in a future work.

CHAPTER VII

WHAT, THEN, IS CHRISTIANITY?

The reader who has followed sympathetically the foregoing exposition of the various systems purporting to be the true interpretation of the Christian religion may now be prepared to share the impressive and comforting experience of the writer as he has sought to understand the great forces that have operated in the making of Christian history. It is fitting that we should now attempt to set forth some of the convictions which have arisen in this connection. It may be that the statements to be made will seem but commonplaces, but even so, they take on added force by reason of our survey of historic views and our attempt to enter as fully as possible into the soul of each of them. For we may rest assured that none of these types of Christian thought could possibly have won the devoted allegiance of the numberless multitudes that followed them had they not contained elements of great spiritual power in all instances.

Our answer to the question that lies at the head of this chapter will not take the form of an attempted definition of Christianity in a single formula, nor will it be just one more attempt to reduce our religion to its ultimate and irreducible essence. It will aim, rather, at comprehensiveness and at suggesting lines of further development of the successive theses here to be offered. At the same time we shall proceed on the whole from the more general to the more specific.

1. To begin with, the Christian religion coincides in some degree with all these historic interpretations; it includes them all and yet at the same time it cannot be fully identified now with any one of them or with all of them united. Let us suppose for a moment that by some great cataclysm all those forms in which the Christian religion has been outwardly set forth in the past—the spontaneous words and acts of devotion, the creeds of the thinkers, the liturgies of public worship, the regular customs, the moral codes, the types of organization, and the methods of work popularly accepted—were suddenly to pass away today. What then? The Christian religion would be with us none the less tomorrow. There might be some confusion and perplexity for a time, but that great power which we are habituated to call the Spirit of Christ would remain in men's hearts and would soon begin to adjust itself to the new conditions and demands that must arise. Christianity is nothing if it be not ceaselessly creative of the new. Hence, under the circumstances, it would surely begin at once to forge for itself new forms for utterance, as surely as active children will discover new ways for playing with one another if there be no person to teach them the old. It would clothe its life in these forms and through them it would be effectively propagated in the world again. These new forms would probably resemble some of those that had passed away, but they would be very different because the people using them would be very different from the Christians of the past in respect both to inward life and to outer conditions. For, as a matter of fact, most of our conventional religious forms have come down to us from a time when they meant

something very different to those who used them from what they mean to us who use them now. They can be prevented from having a benumbing effect on our souls only by continual reinterpretations of them, and these reinterpretations would be very confusing to the first users of these forms if they were brought suddenly face to face with them.

Then, too, the forms that would arise in one part of the world and in one grade of society would differ from those that would arise in another part of the world and another grade of society. If these different peoples began to mingle, there would be a repetition of some familiar past experiences. Conferences, controversies, amalgamations, reconciliations, divisions, and excommunications would take place, and yet none of them would take the same course as was taken under similar circumstances in the past. Perhaps all of the many sects among which Christians are now divided would be lost sight of, but new sects would inevitably arise. Of course no such thing will ever happen suddenly—though it is happening all the time, but gradually—and were it to occur we should be both worse off and better off than we are now. It would be a deliverance from slavery to the past. Old theological and ecclesiastical quarrels with their intolerances would be heard no more. Our worship, as well as our creed, would have about it a sincerity and a naturalness most refreshing to anyone who is aware of the purely artificial character of much of our formal worship and of our formal reasonings. For example, there would be no bowings before the image of a virgin and there would be no arguments about miracles. We should save a great deal of time that is

now wasted and a great deal of bitterness would be lost. For a while, at least, we should experience the joyous elasticity of a truly religious life and our faith would be spread abroad with something of the ardor and speed of its earliest achievements. The spirit of inquiry would be freed from the benumbing influence of ecclesiastical office, always jealous of its authority, and would make surer progress. Many stumbling-blocks in the way of would-be believers would disappear. What burdens would be lifted from our souls!

But at the same time it must be confessed that we should be worse off than we are now in some respects if all traditional forms of the regular interpretation of our faith were suddenly taken away. Some kind of external expression is necessary to all religion if men are to hold it firmly or share it with their fellow-men. A faith destitute of all recognizable outer form would probably perish with the death of the man whose faith it was. A recluse might hold it, but it would not become naturalized in the world of men. It would lack historical continuity and would suffer abuse through the whims and vagaries of individuals. If we dropped all traditional religious forms we should need new forms, and these would be of uncertain meaning and value to other people because of never having been subjected to the tests which time applies to everything we do. It is certain that there would be much wavering and uncertainty as to what we meant until long experience had given some settled mode of expression to our inner life. We might enjoy the freshness and spontaneity and freedom of a new faith, but we should be subjected to its temptations and dangers. If we are to believe the

historians, the primitive Christian faith that shook off so many burdens of the past was, relative to the extent of territory and number of people affected, as much troubled by uncertainty and confusion as to its real meaning as is the Christian faith of this restless and confusing time. How long it took those early Christians to find a thought-world and an action-world in which they as believers could find themselves at home! The radical who tosses overboard with impatience all the inherited forms by which Christianity has been helped or hindered makes a bad sailor and may soon be shipwrecked.

We can see, therefore, that past interpretations of Christianity are of great service to us, though they do often impose unnatural burdens on us, though they restrain our freedom of spirit, and though they cannot become ours fully, but must be changed. The liturgies, the moral regulations, the ecclesiastical organizations, and the creeds of the past have a steadying and preservative value. Were it not for them we may well doubt that Christianity as a persistent and definite force in the lives of men would be with us today. Our duty, therefore, is not to cast them rudely away, but to use them as stepping-stones to an interpretation more natural to us and more adequate to our needs. They are guides and also points of departure for something better. We shall exercise our right to set them aside as we gradually grow out of and away from them, just as people gradually change their habits of dress and social customs as one generation gives place to another. The birch tree clothes itself with new bark continually from within and lives on healthily when the old falls

away. We shall reverently and carefully push our inherited religious forms to the periphery of our actual world and clothe our minds and our lives with something that lies nearer to our hearts. For our forms of worship, doctrine, order, and conduct are not truly our religion. They are the outer of which our real religion is the inner.

2. By this means we obtain a method of dealing with claims that certain historic forms are necessary to personal salvation, or, to say the same thing from the Christian point of view, that without them we cannot be Christian. For the sake of convenience we may divide these historic forms into four classes—liturgical, ecclesiastical, social, and doctrinal. These relate respectively to the spirit of worship, the spirit of evangelism, the spirit of action, and the spirit of truth, all of which are found in Christianity. We may assert that all these are essential to the Christian religion and the salvation that it brings. That is to say, a man cannot be Christian unless he worship truly the Christian God, seek to communicate the Christian life to others, practice the Christian morality, and hold the Christian truth.

But while these claims are almost universally allowed among Christians they have only a vague meaning to most people. Something more concrete, more specific, is wanted when people ask for the true marks of the Christian. Some recognizable act of worship or reverence, some visible order, some definite prohibition or command to be obeyed, some formal confession of belief, or all of these put together, are made the prerequisite to bearing the Christian name. As a matter of fact, Christians the world over have always required conformity to one or more of these standards before they

will admit anyone to the rank of Christian. How far is this justifiable? Are such standards admissible?

a) Let us begin with *liturgies*. Evidently the primitive Christians after a time made but little use of them. It is doubtless true that the early Jewish believers in the messiahship of Jesus adhered in a general way to the practice of observing the Jewish times for prayer, followed the conventional postures in public worship, and used the traditional formulas for the utterance of religious emotion. It may be that for a time they were particularly zealous in the worship of God in the way of the Fathers. But the breach with the Jews who disbelieved in the messiahship of Jesus tended to cause these things to fall away. On the other hand, both the Jewish and the Greek religious custom of baptizing the catechumens in water and of uniting in a sacred feast to their deities gave strength to the Christian practice of baptizing believers with the pronunciation of the name of Jesus over them and their feast in memory of Jesus. For these acts set forth with vividness their sense of union with him in his life's purpose and his death and sealed their confidence in a fuller union to come. Would any man be accepted as a Christian who refused to participate in these acts? We can answer unhesitatingly, No. For such refusal would be tantamount to disowning the specific marks of the Christian. Such a man would be regarded as separating himself from Christ, and inasmuch as the deliverance which Christ would bring when he came again would be only for those who bore his name, the man would be rejected at the last day. It is just what we should expect, therefore, if we find these liturgical acts presently

viewed by Christians everywhere as necessary to salvation for everyone.

Out of this grew the entire sacramental system of the Catholic church. With both priests and people the sacraments became the divinely prescribed means of receiving the saving grace of God. When the radical reformers of Protestantism fought against this substitution of an outer act for an inward state, some of them went so far as to repudiate the idea that any definite outward act had a necessary or even a natural place in the Christian religion. Others sought to restore the primitive practice without attributing any necessary relation between these forms and the procurement of salvation. Yet, while theoretically the necessity has been increasingly denied, it has been found *practically* necessary, if the Christian community is to live on in the world—and that means if the Christian gospel is to save the world—that these early liturgical forms be continued. The churches that have eschewed them have not been markedly successful in evangelism. Are liturgical forms essential, then, for each man, if he would be saved? An enlightened modern Christianity answers, Certainly not, for that would be heathenism. Multitudes of true Christians pay little or no attention to them without perceivable spiritual loss. Protestant pulpits make but scanty mention of them in these days. On the other hand, it would seem that some form of liturgy is necessary to the propagation and sustenance of the Christian faith. For without some outer form of expression that has become familiar by use and significant of the Christian faith the Christian spirit would be lacking many of its most effective modes of utterance

and would measurably fail to catch the imagination or stir the fervor of multitudes. From the practical point of view, therefore, some kind of liturgy is necessary, but there is no form that is permanently necessary. A liturgy of some sort, be it simple or elaborate, is indispensable, but a fixed or statutory liturgy, whether simple or complex, is a detriment to the Christian spirit and may eventuate in heathenism.

b) If we consider the *ecclesiastical forms* that have arisen as regularly established modes of Christian activity or as the outcome of efforts to institutionalize the Christian faith, a similar conclusion is reached. Early Christians constituted a fellowship. They met regularly in assembly. They recognized one another as members of a common order or body. They were organized for mutual encouragement and protection and for the purpose of spreading the faith. They chose leaders and submitted to regular guidance. All this was natural, inevitable, and necessary if they were to enjoy a continuous existence as a people. Without this continuance their gospel would fail of perpetuation and amid the many theories claiming divine origin believers would fall into confusion and disappear by dispersion. So, then, it was perfectly natural that membership in the Christian community should be made a condition of sharing in the benefits of the new spiritual communion. It only required time and favorable circumstances to bring about the well-known transition from this natural point of view to the view that membership in an established external order was necessary in order to participation in the salvation of the last great day.

In all ages there have been Christians who held themselves aloof from allegiance to any institutionalized form of Christianity whatsoever and without apparent loss—but perhaps real gain—to their souls. Yet in the end most people will fail to hold steadfastly to their faith without some such support. Some form of church has been found *practically* necessary to the maintenance of the Christian faith—that is, to the salvation of the world. But this is a very different thing from saying that any fixed form of church organization or order is necessary. Fixity in this realm is as dangerous as fixity of ritual. The outcome must be some kind of hierarchical despotism. All the great church systems furnish illustrations of it.

c) When we come to *forms of conduct* this mode of reasoning may seem questionable. Yet the principle is not different. For there is nothing more common in the world than "the form of godliness without the power." True morality is in the inner quality of soul. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Yet it is quite possible, and alas! a by no means infrequent occurrence, that the feeling of humility and the sense of purity may cloak the most heartless arrogance and the most selfish indulgence. The external conduct must be there, or there is no morality—so say men the world over, and they say it truly.

On the other hand, when one asks, What in particular are the forms of conduct essential to the Christian life? it is startling to find how many of the forms of one day would become detrimental to a true morality if maintained as essential for a later day. What are the moral

deeds a man must do if he is to be truly Christian? The day must declare it. Let us take one or two instances of a simple kind and very pertinent to our discussion. It was said to them of old time: "If a man shall smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other also." Such a mode of action was essential to the successful living of the Christian life at a time when their faith was under the ban of public scorn or legal prohibition. Men won their way and preserved the Christian salvation for future generations by bearing violence without attempting to bring their assailants to judgment. Only by so enduring could the higher type of life gain recognition in the community. To fail at this point would be to renounce Christ. But when a time comes when violence offered to a man on account of his faith is recognized as unjust, and when the Christian allows his assailant at all times to go unscathed in reputation and unpunished in body, he may be doing the community, the assailant, and himself a great wrong. It is well that all men be allowed to live their lives decently without disturbance, and it may cost much less sacrifice or suffering to one's self to let a miscreant go scot free than to bring him to justice and to his senses and thereby to protect decent people against his cruelty. The same line of remark is pertinent to the saying, "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my servants fight." When Christians are placed by their fellow-men in positions of great responsibility in the government of their country, the rule of conduct suited to a time when their most effective means of promoting peace was by throwing aside all the weapons of war must give way to a truer embodiment, for a later time, of the Christian spirit.

Morality is essential and abiding, but its forms incessantly change within the same faith.

d) A similar result is obtained from a study of the successive *doctrinal forms* in which Christianity has found expression. The earliest Christian faith may have been in many instances an instinctive drawing to an attractive personality, an affection for him, a feeling of rest and security in his presence, a confidence in his power to meet one's deepest need, without any clear analysis of what is meant by such a faith. But this was more than the unthinking, dumb loyalty of an animal. It was more than a mere feeling. It had meaning because it was the movement of a self-conscious spirit. In order to take a regular place in a man's life and affect all his movements, this new faith must needs be defined, it must receive interpretation by and to the man's thought. Almost from the very beginning this began to be done. Faith in Jesus found its first intellectual expression in the confession, Jesus is the Christ. Without raising the question how much of truth and how much of error there was involved in the identification of Jesus with the Jewish Messiah, we can see that this confession placed the faith in him in line with the spiritual growth of the Jewish people and with the spiritual longings of other peoples and tended to give the faith a clearness and a stability that enabled it to battle successfully for its life in a time of great danger. The demand arose naturally that everyone that professed to be a disciple of his should make this confession. A denial of it would bar the entrance to the new community. In barring him from the community it would shut him off from many of the sanctifying

influences which flowed out from that community to the world. To that extent the confession was necessary to his salvation. Thus the gospel of Jesus became the gospel of the Christ. "Who is the liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" It was an easy transition from the view that he who denied the messiahship of Jesus should be kept out of the Christian community to the practice of accepting all those who were willing to make the confession as true participants in the spiritual benefits of the Christian communion. A similar thing occurred when it was affirmed that Jesus was the Logos of God, and the same thing again when he was declared to be the second person in the Trinity. In fact this has been the history of the making and enforcement of the creeds of Christendom generally. The acceptance of the creed is viewed as necessary to Christian salvation; Christianity and creed are identified.

Now it is true that the formation of a creed is an inner necessity of the Christian human spirit for the simple reason that it is the faith of a human spirit, and it cannot be held as an incentive and guide to a human life unless it be conceived in intellectual forms, inasmuch as a life that is lived apart from these is less than human. If, then, we take the term salvation in a comprehensive sense as embracing the whole course of human betterment, a creed is necessary to salvation. Then, if we widen our view so as to take in the fact that the faith necessarily creates for itself a community in which it is the sustaining force, it is plain that this community must construe for itself an intelligible conception of its faith or it will not be able to continue as a conscious unity. If salvation is a movement toward the creation

of a perfect community, then a creed is necessary to salvation, that is, to such a salvation as the Christian religion brings to mankind at large.

But when we ask, Which of the many historic creeds is necessary to our salvation, that is, to the better life which Christianity brings to us today? the answer must be, Not one of them in the exact sense in which it was originally meant. Those creeds were a support and a strength to the men of other days whose needs and powers were somewhat differently developed from ours, whose aims, we may be permitted to affirm, were in some respects inferior to ours, who could be satisfied with that which would come short of satisfying us; so that even when we seek to utilize for our purposes the language of those creeds we are obliged to put a somewhat different meaning into the words. Otherwise they would become an external law foisted upon a free spirit, limiting its normal course, preventing its true progress, and thereby become damning in their influence. Creeds are necessary to salvation; but a stereotyped creed? Never. Creeds, moral customs, churches, liturgies, belong together. The same kind of necessity that calls for their creation calls again for their transformation.

3. We may now proceed to indicate, in the briefest possible manner, the lines of an interpretation of the Christian faith as it lives and reigns in our hearts today. I must warn the reader that our statements will be commonplace in form, but it is hoped that they will be found to carry with them some new meaning and force as a result of preceding discussions. We shall proceed, as before, from the more general to the more specific.

a) Our first affirmation is: *Christianity is to be understood primarily as a quality of spiritual life.* We are not speaking here of life in the biological sense, that is, as the principle of physical animation that men have in common with lower orders of existence; but we are using the term as descriptive of the action of a mind, an intelligence, a thinking being, a being that is self-conscious in all of the many modes of its consciousness, whose activities are free because they are primarily directed from within itself and whose feelings are such as only such a free self-conscious being could have. Such a being has its life in the realm of the spiritual. Such an existence is spiritually alive. If it has physical or material connections, if it moves also in the realm of material things which other beings with a physical frame move in, nevertheless all these things have a peculiar meaning to it because they are taken up, understood, and used as if they belonged to itself. If man is a spiritual being, then his home is in this realm. Whatever we may say about his body, whatever dependence he has upon a material environment, whatever connection of necessity may exist between his physical life and his spirit, his true life still remains spiritual. You only know the man when you find that all these other things are the externals of his life, and they have no importance for him as a man except in so far as he can take them up into the movements of his self-conscious spirit, in so far as he can think them and use his will upon them.

When we say that Christianity is a *quality* of spiritual life we mean that the Christian man is one who is aware that his interests are finally of the spiritual kind. These

are the things that make the most effective appeal to his emotions, that most powerfully awaken his thoughts, and that call forth the finest exercise, the whole exercise, of his will. He will define the meaning of his life in spiritual terms. We mean to say also that spiritual life among men is of many grades and descriptions. Its progress varies among different groups of people and these become different types of spirituality. Each of these has some distinguishing quality that runs through its whole frame. Christianity is the name of a type of spirituality that gets its character from a peculiar worthfulness that belongs to it. What that distinctive quality is we shall try to state more fully in a moment.

This is, of course, another way of saying that a definition of Christianity cannot be obtained from without. The story of its historical origin and progress is valuable for purposes of interpretation; so also are the monuments to its character which time has set up or the descriptions which men have offered of it. But the starting-point as well as the essential thing in the interpretation is an understanding of what is meant by the actual experience of the spiritual. For this interpretation the whole of the activities of our human spirit becomes material to be used. That is to say, all that pertains to the processes that go on within our spirits must be taken account of. When the Christian thinker tries to expound his faith he must make use of the materials, methods, and conclusions of the spiritual sciences at their best. Psychology, logic, aesthetics, ethics, metaphysics, are in part an exposition of Christianity. In every one of these and the other sciences

associated with them there is a record of the movement of the human spirit in its effort to fulfil itself by becoming master of the world of action, thought, and feeling that belongs to it. Each one of these indicates the line of action the human spirit must take if it would be fully Christian. Every step forward made by these sciences must be taken account of in our interpretation of Christianity, if Christianity belongs to the realm of the spiritual life. The sensitiveness of Christian thinkers to all the developments which take place in these sciences is perfectly natural, since each of them opens up more fully the spiritual world in which the Christian finds his home. For surely we cannot be content in the end to claim anything less than that in the Christian religion the free activity of our spirit comes to its highest pinnacle of attainment. And in saying this for the spiritual sciences we have prepared the way to say the same of the so-called physical sciences, since these too constitute the methods by which the human spirit turns the facts of the physical world into forces of the spiritual order.

In all this we seem to be saying that Christianity is a natural religion. And this is exactly so, if the natural be set over against the unnatural—which is the proper antithesis. If we then proceed to add that it is also supernatural, this is not to be taken to mean that it is extra-natural in the sense that something which pertains to a different world or sphere of being from that in which we men naturally move is brought to us when we become Christian. For the spiritual world is our human world, the world that is natural to us. As regards our spirit *we men* are supernatural, and the idea of the

supernatural gets its whole content from our inner consciousness of superiority to the material and our ability to use it for our purposes. The supernatural is the higher natural, the natural come to its true purpose and its true meaning. If in the so-called Christianity there is found something that contradicts the natural, this, so far from being a source of satisfaction to us or a confirmation of the superiority of our faith, only tends to beget doubts of its value. There is no violence done to our spirit in our becoming Christian, nor is there some other nature added to our human nature in some inexplicable way, so making man a dual being. But when the human spirit is naturally unfolded, when its life is normally developed, it becomes Christian. In fact that is just what Christianity is for. The truly spiritual man—he is the Christian man.

Spiritual life is not merely given to us; it is *gained.* Men attain to the spiritual gradually and by great effort. The poet, the moral man, the philosopher, fulfils the powers of his genius through long-sustained endeavor. The first of these works indefatigably to make the universe expressive of the deep harmony and unity of the human spirit in the realm of feeling; the second seeks to make it instrumental to the fulfilment of the potencies of the human spirit in the realm of will; the third construes it as the embodiment of those concepts which in their organic unity constitute the perfection of our spirit in the realm of thought. Progress in all these becomes ultimately progress in Christianity. On the other hand, the man whose aesthetic nature, or whose moral action, or whose thinking is wanton or confused or hurtful is for this very reason defectively Christian. The whole

round of our spiritual life is implicated in our Christianity. When I say, therefore, that Christianity is a quality of spiritual life, I refer to the *wholeness* of spirit it has in it for men. The Christian man is the man that is whole in his spirit.

It follows that any purported form of Christianity that cramps or benumbs the emotional nature of men by crushing its native feeling or by opening no field for its normal action is to that extent unspiritual and un-Christian. Any purported form of Christianity that erects or tolerates a barrier to the free movement of the human spirit in its thought, or that offers to a person some act or symbol or sacrament that he is to receive without seeking to understand the why or the wherefore of it, is to that extent unspiritual and un-Christian. And any purported form of Christianity that seeks to limit the normal action of the human will by robbing it of its initiative or freedom or by setting up fixed external standards of conformity is to that extent unspiritual and un-Christian.

Further, it follows that the ideally true Christianity, the Christianity that can actually be the religion of all men and bring all men to the perfect man, lies yet in the future. It does not follow that we are to disparage or forget the past. It is to be kept in mind and cherished —not as that to which we are to return but as our point of departure for the better. The Christianity of any people or period of the past was true in so far as it prepared men to transcend it and themselves. The Christianity of the past is still true, to our minds, in so far as it assists us in the realization of the potentialities of our faith by maintaining continuity of movement

and by supplying the impetus to life that comes from contemplation of a long experience. There is a sense in which our inherited Christian forms become norms for the future. By exhibiting to our minds the operations of the Christian spirit under conditions that have partly passed away and partly remain, these earlier forms help us to divine the direction in which the same spirit of faith will fulfil itself under conditions partly similar to, and partly different from, the present. They assist the prophetic spirit in us to make out the way we ought to take. Thus they become true only in so far as they show the way to a better than themselves. We are never to forget that, if our Christianity is to make good its claim to be the truly spiritual religion, it can do so only by bringing to perfection the spirituality that lives in men now. The true religion is that which can finally be the religion of all men in that it possesses the power to bring all mankind at last to that unity of life in which each member of our race will find himself fulfilled and satisfied in every other. This is precisely what our Christianity professes to be.

b) *Christianity is a distinctive type of religion.* This is not a mere repetition of the preceding affirmation. For we may speak of pure spirituality without including religion. One may say that in the perfection of the aesthetic, the moral, and the intellectual quality of human nature we have perfect spirituality. But this in itself is not religion. Neither is the unity of these several qualities religion. For religion exists when the qualities of our human nature are held together in a consciousness of relation to a higher being than ourselves. Christianity pertains to our spiritual life as a

consciousness of relation to this Higher Beyond. In this regard it is a normal activity of our human mind. Everywhere men feel the drawing of this Beyond. They feel themselves constrained to think about it, to do something about it, and their hearts are often suffused with a deep feeling of happiness about it. They feel themselves dependent for the things they prize upon this Higher Being and they yield themselves in devotion to him. They vary greatly in the degree to which they are affected in this manner, for there are degrees of religiousness among men. But we may say that that man is the most truly religious who, in the midst of the most intense activities of mind and heart and will, in the moment when they are all concentrated in a single aim, is the most fully aware that he is subject to the action of a Higher than himself. This Higher Being may be conceived in thought as mightier, or more enduring, or more intelligent, or better than himself, or as including all these in the superlative degree. This is God. And we all feel his pressure upon us and his attractiveness.

Christianity in its unity is one of the many different ways in which men exercise this consciousness of God. The manner in which the whole emotional, intellectual, and volitional life of the Christian is stamped with this God-consciousness is distinctive and belongs to no other class of men. It is like to all other religions and yet unlike them all. Men are aware of God in all religions. In Christianity they are aware of God in a peculiar manner. But, inasmuch as it does have kinship with all other religions, a knowledge of these other faiths is essential to a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity.

If, then, we believe, as we truly do, that our religion is destined to become the religion of all mankind, this must be understood to mean that the transition from any other faith to the Christian faith is not purely revolutionary or an act of mere violence to the earlier faith of the convert. His conversion is just what is to be expected, it is the natural thing to happen, when the two are brought face to face. This is another way of saying that Christianity, *my Christianity*, has within it the power to bring all men eventually into a single communion of faith because all these others have that in them which may be regarded as Christianity in its beginnings or its lower stages. Hence we must say that any interpretation of Christianity that comes short of this, or that makes it out to be a religion that seeks to gather out of the world only a portion of our human family, either falsifies the character of the Christian faith or declares in substance that it is a temporary faith destined to give place to a better. Christianity is committed to the conquest of the world. Surely we do not mean anything less than this when we say that the Christian God is the only God.

c) Christianity is the religion whose whole character is determined by the personality of Jesus Christ. Many religions have their Christ, though, of course, he is not called by that name. The most distinguishing mark of Christianity is that its Christ is Jesus. He dominates the history of Christianity and becomes the touchstone of all that professes to be Christian. Now the chief tests of all religions are their conception of God and their conception of man. When the Christian affirms that his God is the only true God, he not only means

that his God is the only one the thought of whom can satisfy the universal longing of the human heart for the fellowship of the perfect life, but he says it because he has found in the contemplation of the personality of Jesus Christ, in the full significance of that personality as he now sees it, the assurance that in him lies the realization of that longing. This is what Christians have always found. Christianity is Jesus Christ's gift to the world. It originated through his advent into the world of men and it is constituted and maintained by the perpetuation and development of his personal character in them. It is his life in men. Christianity exists nowhere but in Christians. They *are* Christianity. It is as in them that Christ can be said to be Christianity. Thereby we have found the God we seek. Through him God has come to be the life of our life. We finally set forth the character of our God by setting forth Jesus' character as we feel it and see it now after the passing of so many centuries. In that sense he is Lord and God to us. But our description of the Christian is also given in terms of the character of Jesus Christ. He is the true man of us, the man we all would be. To the believer God and man are one in Christ Jesus.

Because it is so easy to use such words as these in a vague and senseless way we must go a little farther and ask, What is the meaning of the presence of Jesus Christ in our world? The answer may be obtained in the popular twofold manner—it is discovered in the meaning of his teachings and in the meaning of his example. The first of these requires much more than a summary of his teachings and an explanation of what they meant to his mind when he gave them. To know their mean-

ing we must trace out their influence on the world of men from the first to the present and mark their contribution to the solution of the problems of our lives. The second requires that we go far beyond an attempt to find a rule of conduct, as if to follow his example were to be Christian. We must find how the knowledge of his career has affected the character of human living. This carries us on to an estimate of the worth of the fellowship his first followers enjoyed with him and transmitted to succeeding generations. In short, by the meaning of the impact of his personality upon the world we refer to the light which such a personality as he was throws on the character and purpose of all living. As I have already remarked, the liturgies and organizations and creeds of Christendom were the outcome in past times of efforts to set this forth, but there is only a comparatively small modicum of his influence reflected in these. The great majority of Christians for the greater part of their lives have little to do with these traditional forms. After all, there is only an occasional reference to them, for most of us are so busy in the common tasks of life that there is little time or opportunity for thinking about religious forms. The power of Jesus Christ is mostly felt through the subtle influence of the lives of Christians about us. There is an inner movement of our spirits toward the aim of life that comes to us through association with them. This, in truth, is what we mean by the Holy Spirit in men's hearts. And this was the great gift of Jesus to the world when he gave himself. Christianity is no mere reproduction of his views and practices under altered conditions. It is something a thousand times more powerful. It is the

onward urge of life he has given to men; it is the self-commitment of men to the highest of which they are capable; it is the devotion of men to their fellow-men in the endeavor to come into perfect unity of will and thought and feeling with them. Christianity is the religion of perfect consecration to the good of the world of men, and this is the same as to say that it is the religion of consecration to the one true God. And in all this the figure of Jesus Christ stands before the eye of the Christian. He does so, however, not in the merely empirical form in which some matter-of-fact statement of what he said or did would bring him before us, but through the empirical facts of his career we are enabled to discern in prophetic vision the perfect, eternal personality ever beckoning us on toward himself with the longing in our hearts to become like him. And we naturally call the holy figure standing at the end of the way by the name of him who presented it to our sanctified imagination when he gave himself to the world in life and death—Jesus Christ.

The particular modes by which we shall severally arrive at this perfect life are important indeed, but they are of secondary importance. They will differ from one another indefinitely as men in their freedom and initiative select or create for themselves the symbols and instruments of their faith. Wherefore, since we must see our Christ with our own eyes, we must all make our own interpretation of the Christian faith as we seek to fulfil the meaning of life. For us there can be no set rules or fixtures for faith, for Christianity is the free realization, by the self-conscious spirit, of the kind of life Jesus Christ brought into the world.

d) Christianity is the practice of the most perfect human fellowship. Long ago Schleiermacher pointed out that religions are communion-forming. This is pre-eminently true of the Christian religion in its historical course. The ecclesiastical maxim of Catholicism, "Without the Church is no salvation," has not been treated by Protestants as a falsehood pure and simple but as a perversion of the truth. They have sought to preserve the recognition of this truth through a distinction between the "visible church" and the "invisible church." Both parties bear testimony to the common conviction that Christianity in its very self brings men together in a spiritual unity and that where this does not exist Christianity cannot be found.

This is not to be understood as meaning that Christianity brings men together in a single organization as though the Christian fellowship had to be identified with an institution. For the complete institutionalization of a religious faith becomes destructive of the freedom and initiative of the individual—which is not to save him but to damn him. Under such circumstances there can be no real fellowship, but only a reduction of fellowship to the level of mechanical conformity to a fixed rule. True fellowship exists only where individual men in all their distinctiveness maintain that full self-respect without which mutual respect must disappear. For this reason also it is impossible to identify the Christian religion with the religion of the recluse or the thoroughgoing mystic. The one falls into the egoism that utters itself in censoriousness and comtempt of others. The other, if it do not the same, falls into vagueness and meaningless self-obliteration and a loss of interest in

other men. Christianity is the religion of the most perfect fellowship because it magnifies every human life and enhances the worth of every factor that goes into the exaltation of it. Thus it teaches men to bring all the good things of the world into their service, and it makes of the whole order of things a regular medium of the communion of men with one another.

A word or two must be said about the *practice* of this fellowship. It is built up by a reciprocal activity and receptivity. It is best expressed in those words of Jesus which set forth the moral unity he sought with his disciples: "Whosoever would become great among you all shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be servant of all. For the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many." Christian fellowship does not consist merely in an emotional unity or intellectual agreement, but it is fundamentally constituted by moral action. On the one hand, it is the effort to bestow one's self with all one's powers upon others and to find in their willing reception of the gift the satisfaction of one's desires. On the other hand, it is the willingness to become receptive to the efforts of others to bestow their good on us. Thus everyone receives and everyone gives. None is exalted to superiority and none is degraded to inferiority. As the Christian looks upon the world of men he sees in every man the potentiality to become possessed of all the good that is in himself and he also sees in every other man qualities by participation in which he may himself be enriched in turn. All class divisions pass away. All exclusiveness disappears. Everyone sees his own best self in

others and makes himself their servant. The extension of the Christian communion in the world is co-extensive with this practice. It is in this sense we are to understand the prayer of Christ that all his disciples might become one in him.

e) Christianity is the religion which is one and the same with true morality. There is space here for only a word or two on this great theme. The truth of this statement can be seen even in that attitude of mind in which our relations to our fellow-men and the moral obligations these involve seem farthest from our minds, to wit, in the attitude of Christian worship. Some would say that in the act of worshiping God our experience is religious and not moral, since in that holy moment we are conscious, not of our relations with men, but of our relations with God. He alone is said to be in mind. Men are excluded from the worshiper's thought. And, again, when we are engaged in those enterprises in which our dealings with other men absorb for the time the whole of our energies and we are seeking to conduct these enterprises with due regard to the interests and rights of other men, the experience is ethical and not religious, since it is man and not God whose relations to us are in mind. The attitude is anything but religious. It is about as far as we can imagine anything to be from the spirit of worship. However, a deeper apprehension of both these attitudes will issue in a different conclusion.

Take the Christian act of worship first. It is seen at its best when in an assembly of believers the heart of the worshiper is conscious of the presence and power of a spirit that embraces in its working the hearts of all

who are present. To that spirit they all offer themselves. It is an act of communion with God which is at the same instant communion with men. The prayer and the praise are common to all. It is not the time or place for private petitions or thanks for private favors. The unseemliness of such a thing would be instantly felt. What a purification of motives in prayer takes place! For each feels that he may ask on behalf of himself nothing that he may not request on behalf of all. How readily at such a time the heart is led to embrace in its cry to God the needs of all men and how near they may come to him! Through the personal exaltation that comes to the worshiper in the consciousness of his unity with God they too are exalted in his mind; and their lives take on an ideal character, a worth that can be described fittingly in no other terms than those which describe the worth of God to the heart of the believer. To his mind they are sanctified, his heart goes out in love and devotion to them, disharmonies and antagonisms among the worshipers are laid aside, and all become absorbed in the single aim to exalt and bless one another. They go from that assembly with a deeper realization of the meaning of the life they are living in common and with greater strength to meet one another's claim for good-will and service than they ever had before. In the act of worship together their entire lives are moralized.

The same is true in the end even of the experience of "private" worship. There are specific needs and longings of each which cannot be uttered fittingly in public. In order to utter these we seek to be alone in our devotion. It may seem that here especially the world of men is excluded from our minds and the soul

is engaged in the purest worship because it is alone with God. But this is a very defective view of private worship. For the worship of prayer and praise which the man offers on his own behalf in the secret chamber can never be solely for himself. He is guided throughout by the consciousness that the interpretation of his needs flows from the fact that there are illegitimate as well as legitimate petitions. In every petition he is constrained to ask for those things alone which may be asked in similar circumstances for all men equally, and in every utterance of praise or thanksgiving he really gives thanks only for those things which may be no exclusive possession of his but the possession of all. Though physically isolated, he is far from being alone. Indeed, one of the special advantages of occasional physical isolation in worship lies in the greater facility of conceiving the universal character of his wants when no single material figure is in his sight. The whole world is ideally present in the sublime moments of his personal adoration, and he lifts it all Godward when he lifts himself. Thereby his worship partakes of the highest moral quality and therein lies its value for the Christian. Our time and energies are not to be divided between God and men. He and they are not rivals for our love and loyalty. And, accordingly, when we pass out from the place of worship to the common drudgery of life it is with a profounder sense of the meaning of it all because it has been bathed with the consciousness that God is in it all. The performance of the common task becomes to the Christian an act of worship. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto me."

f) Christianity is the religion of moral redemption. It is not without reason that the crucifixion of Jesus has been the focal point of interest in his personality and career throughout all the Christian centuries. It signalizes the fact that Christian faith expresses itself in the man's moral struggle and eventuates in an absolute devotion to an idealized humanity; the fact that human life everywhere has a deep cleavage running through it and a bitter struggle within goes on unceasingly; the fact that the victory for those who are being worsted in the struggle can come in no other way than by the vicarious suffering and labor of those who occupy the higher plane on behalf of those who dwell on the lower. Sin and salvation are ever present to our minds —not as formal theological terms merely, but as significant of the ineradicable longing to escape from the worse to the better. Thus the figure of the Savior dominates the horizon of the Christian life. Repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, atonement, are inseparably connected in the Christian experience.

That which the individual experiences for himself becomes indicative of what must come to all mankind if life is not to lose its meaning and value. Hence, to the Christian philosopher, the whole story of humanity becomes the story of the deliverance of men from the dominion of the evil and entrance into the kingdom of good. The glory of Jesus Christ is that it is he who has bestowed that historical redemption on mankind. This it is that has made him Lord of our hearts and King of the world. He has imparted to men the redemptive power that lay originally in himself and made it a human possession for all time. "I have been crucified with

Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me. And that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me."

g) Finally, *Christianity is the religion of perfect peace.* "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you," said the Redeemer. He is represented as saying these words when the supreme conflict was impending and he knew it. They were uttered in view also of the struggles into which his followers were warned that they were about to enter. The peace, therefore, which is here spoken of cannot be the same as ease or freedom from trial. Christianity does not deliver men from the obligation to enter into the conflicts of life. It does not save them from trial. On the contrary, it impels them to take upon themselves growing burdens and to share in the battle of life on an ever-increasing scale. What it does in this regard is to equip men with the power to endure the trials of life and discharge its responsibilities with a balanced mind, with calmness and confidence, and with a trust in God that nothing in the way of suffering can destroy. The Christian spirit adjusts itself to all the untoward conditions that confront it and lives in freedom, security, and strength.

At the same time the Christian faces the material world with all its mysteries and tragedies, without quailing or fear. The universe has ceased to be evil to him. It is the arena in which he finds the necessary field for the action of a redeemed spirit. It is the instrument of God for the effectuation of his saving will. He has no dread of the discoveries of science or philosophy, but eagerly anticipates them. The thought of the

unknown future cannot terrify him. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose." He sees the evil world passing away and "the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God," coming down from heaven. And he is at peace.

These, it seems to me, are the fundamental characteristics of the Christian religion. The order in which they have been stated above is not intended to represent the order in which we always experience its meaning. The order differs, if there be order at all, in different persons and conditions. But these are its permanent features, and all further interpretation of it consists in the unfolding of these according to the varying needs of men.

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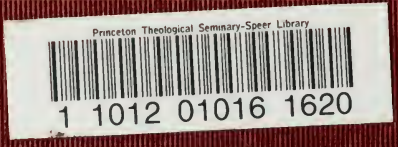
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